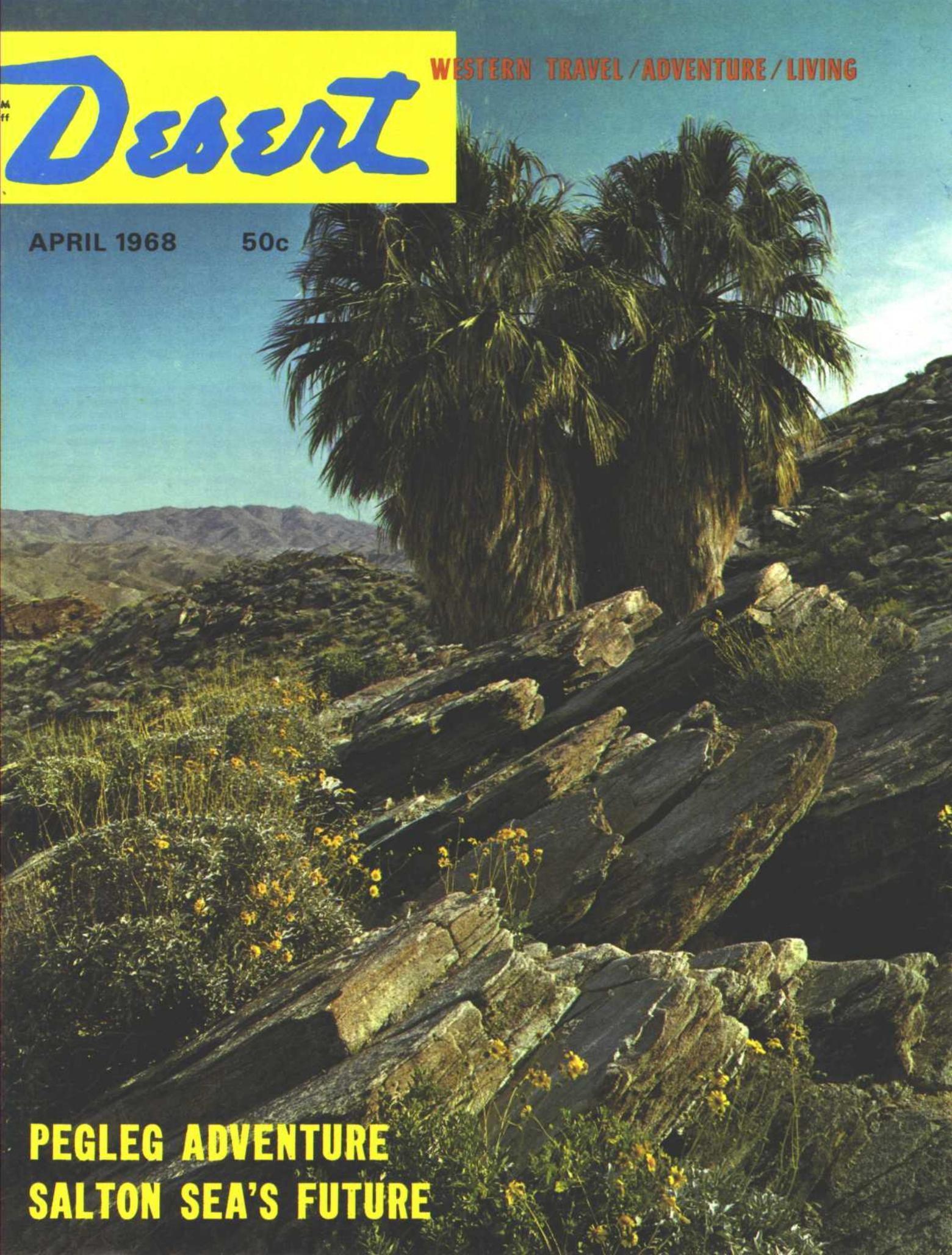


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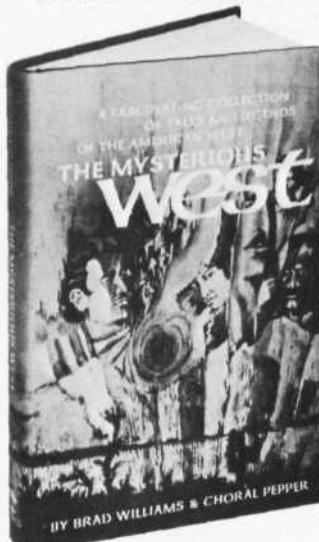
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### APRIL COLOR PHOTOS

Photographer David Muench calls his cover photograph "Desert Ecology" showing the dramatic contrast of Washingtonian Palms to surrounding desert slopes. Taken in Andreas Canyon grove near Palm Desert. The inside photograph is Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in Arizona by Don Valentine, a frequent contributor to Desert Magazine.

# New factual evidence on the legends of the West



By Brad Williams and  
Choral Pepper

This book examines many little-known stories and legends that have emerged from the western region of North America.

Included are such phenomena as the discovery of a Spanish galleon in the middle of the desert; the strange curse that rules over San Miguel Island; the discovery of old Roman artifacts buried near Tucson, Arizona; the unexplained beheading of at least 13 victims in the Nahanni Valley; and many other equally bewildering happenings. Elaborate confidence schemes and fantastically imagined hoaxes are documented, along with new factual evidence that seems to corroborate what were formerly assumed to be tall tales.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

### GHOST TOWNS OF THE COLORADO ROCKIES

By Robert L. Brown

Written by the author of *Jeep Trails to Colorado Ghost Towns*, this book deals with ghost towns accessible by passenger car. Just to keep things interesting, however, he has sneaked in a few where a four-wheel drive vehicle or a pair of willing legs are necessary to reach the actual town from the passenger car road. Arranged in alphabetical order, the ghost towns range from Alma, which arose in 1872 and was "named for all the Almas in town," to the Virginia Dale, established in 1862, which was named to honor the wife of building supervisor Jack Slade who was constructing stage coach stations along the old Cherokee Trail to Denver. This is the same Jack Slade who was the notorious gunfighter with so many notches on his gun.

The book gives directions for finding each of the ghost towns, along with some hair-raising history told in a fresh, exciting way. The author has personally visited each of his towns and each one is accompanied with a photograph—some historic, some modern.

For desert dwellers looking for cool summer trips, this book has much to offer. A map identifying the location relative to a modern highway is contained in the covers of the book. Hardcover, 401 pages, \$6.25.

### OLD MINES AND GHOST CAMPS OF CALIFORNIA

By Ekman, Parker, Storms, Penniman and Dittmar

Reprinted from a statewide report made for 1899, this paperback includes established mines and camps up to that date. Historical photos illustrate each chapter and a great amount of interesting data covers methods of mining in the different mines, and the various kinds of minerals mined. At this time

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Southern California's vast mineral regions were largely undeveloped, so the book carries only one chapter pertaining to them, but it gives an interesting history regarding the discovery of gold here in 1812. According to some authorities, early padres gathered placer gold with the aid of Indians and in 1828 some was shipped from San Diego. However, the padres suppressed knowledge of this as much as possible. Their production was small and apparently ceased after the above shipment. Then in 1841 places were discovered in San Feliciana Canyon, about 40 miles northwest of Los Angeles. Local inhabitants rushed to the gold fields, but it took the discovery of James Marshall up north, six years later to turn on the world wide gold rush. Paperback, 144 pages, \$3.50.

### OLD MINES AND GHOST CAMPS OF NEW MEXICO

By Fayette Jones

Reprinted from *New Mexico Mines and Minerals*, 1905, this book covers mines and camps up to that date only. A chapter on the early Spanish conquests for gold mentions lost treasure legends that no doubt led to later discoveries of new ones. Geology of the various regions, old-timers and methods of mining are all discussed, as well as the history behind many of the old mines of that era. The state is divided into mining districts which, accompanied with descriptive landmarks, makes it easy for a reader today to identify locations, even though many of these places exist no more. Paperback, 214 pages, \$4.00.

## BAJA: Land of Lost Missions

By Marquis McDonald with Glenn Oster

This very poorly written book is good only in that much of the information incorporated in it is taken from a book written by Arthur North in 1903. The writers actually repeated North's journey in search of missions, using his out-of-print book as their guide.

On an Erle Stanley Gardner expedition in 1966, which this reviewer accompanied, we discovered the true location of Dolores del Norte. Whatever the writers of the above book identified as this mission was obviously something else.

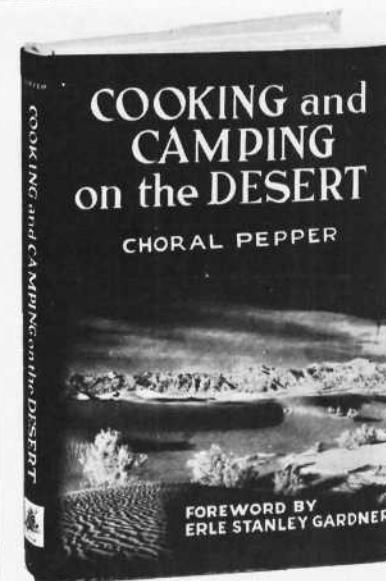
They made their first trip in 1959 with a jeep, hiring mules from Mexican ranchers to reach places where no trails existed. In recent years the writers retraced some of their earlier route and found few changes. Baja *aficionados* may wish to add this book to their collections; not for its literary value, but because no one, since Arthur North made his trip in 1903, has covered the mission trail so entirely. Fragments of mission history are included, along with a boring diatribe of innocuous first-person horseplay that is about as exciting as getting

ducked in a back yard pool. It is lamentable that the writers were incapable of sharing with readers the really great adventure they must have had. Hard cover, photographs of missions, 161 pages. \$4.95. C.P.

## HAPPY WANDERER TRIPS

By Slim Barnard

Well-known TV stars Henrietta and Slim Barnard have put together all of the fine maps and stories about their travels through Southern California, taken from their *Happy Wanderer* travel shows. Each of the 52 trips covered contains a history of the area, the approximate gasoline consumption from Los Angeles, average hotel rate for the destination and the cost of meals for the extent of the trip. Also included is information about what to wear and the best season to visit each area. High desert dude ranches, beach resorts, river trips, nature trips, lost mine hunts and too many others to enumerate here make this large format travel book the best on the market for the region it covers. Paperback, about 150 pages, large format, \$2.95.



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# A Trip to the Big House

by Jan S. Paul



ACK in the '30s a trip to the "big house" meant going to prison. Not so in Arizona, in the '60s. There "Big House" is the English translation of Casa Grande, the name given to the 600-year-old Hohokam ruins south of Phoenix. In fact, Casa Grande is only one of several attractions in a one-day loop trip south and west of that city.

Leaving Phoenix so as to reach Mesa at 9:00 a.m. (16 miles from downtown Phoenix), the first stop is the grounds of the Mormon Temple at 525 East Main. Here are found hundreds of exotic cacti and shrubs and the visitor is welcome to stroll about. The temple, too, is a thing of beauty, having been described as "one of the world's most beautiful religious buildings."

From Mesa, State 87 goes south

through Chandler and then southeast to the Casa Grande National Monument. Don't make the mistake of taking State 93 south to the town of Casa Grande. The two routes are together through Chandler, but branch about seven miles to the south. Be sure to take the left route; the towns on the sign will be Coolidge and Florence.

Casa Grande National Monument is two miles north of Coolidge and 38 miles from Mesa. Here the Hohokam Indians, with perhaps some help from the Pueblo, built their Big House approximately 150 years before Columbus discovered America. They deserted the place for some strange, and still unknown, reason in the approximate year of 1450. Although Casa Grande is the major tourist attraction (with guided tours 25¢ per person), there are other ruins in the area, including those of a canal system that pre-dates the Big House by some 700 years!

The town of Casa Grande is about 25 miles from the ruin via State 87 through Coolidge to La Palma, then due west on 287. The Southwest Gas Company, 114 East Fourth Street, conducts daily car cavalcade trips from October through April and although reservations are necessary for these all-day ventures, the company will provide a schedule of upcoming tours, take your reservation, and provide information about interesting out-of-the-way places that are of interest. And don't forget that Casa Grande is also the home of the San Francisco Giant's farm training complex. This is the logical place to stop for lunch.

Gila Bend is 57 miles west of Casa Grande via State 84 and Interstate 8. It has been called the hot spot of Arizona and it does register some high summer temperatures. The attraction here is rockhounding, Indian picture writing, and pioneer sites. There is also a recently formed Painted Rock Lake.

North of Gila Bend is Buckeye where one of the finest collections of saddles, sixguns, war bonnets and tomahawks are housed in the Buckeye Historical and Archaeological Museum, open Tuesday through Saturday. Not only are pioneer artifacts preserved, but the history and prehistory of land we now call Arizona is depicted as well.

Fifteen miles northeast of Buckeye, just west of Avondale, is the strangest "Airbase" you will ever see. Here is the Mothball Air Fleet, the assembled collection of World War II aircraft that thrills kids and aviation buffs. A roadside exhibit beside U.S. 80 makes identification of the various craft instantly possible.

Follow U.S. 80 east on Buckeye Road. Just beyond the freeway (Interstate 17), make a left on 17th Avenue and, in the event you haven't already recognized the address, you will find yourself in front of the Arizona State Capitol. What better ending to a trip through such a representative section of the state! □

Can you tell . . .

# The Deadly Difference

by Robert H. Wright



HE Southwest has more strange and unusual forms of wildlife than any other section of the United States. Some of these are poisonous, but the few with deadly bites or stings are negligible compared to the many that resemble them and sometimes almost frighten people to death. Others possess such exaggerated reputations that they are feared more than the deadly ones. It is to your advantage to be able to recognize these creatures.

The following photo quiz consists of four pairs of animals. Of the first three pairs, one has a lethal bite or sting, while the other is merely a mild menace. The last pair is included only because they are so frequently confused. One is harmless; the other somewhat poisonous.

Look at each pair closely. Can you tell which is just a menace and which packs a poisonous load?

Photo 1-A



Photo 1-B

## Pair One

You can't tell a snake by its cover any more than you can a book. The angelic white snake (1-A) is a viper in disguise. Note the vertical pupil which is *usually* a sign of a venomous snake. In this case, it is. This is a rattlesnake (*Crotalus viridis v.*) which completely lacks the usual brown spotted pattern because it is an albino! Albinism occurs in almost every species and it would not be at all impossible to happen across an albino copperhead, coral snake, or you-name-it.

Photo 1-B is a fangless nightsnake that might bite you if you stepped on it, but its poison does not seem to affect humans, although it is effective against its normal prey such as lizards. This snake has the vertical pupil of the vipers, but lacks their fangs, so he can not inject venom. His poison is in his saliva. A few scratches from his teeth would be about the only harm this snake could do.



Photo 2-A

#### Pair Two

There are many species of scorpions in the Southwest, but only two species are lethal. The rest can sting all right, but with no more serious effect than the sting of a bee or wasp. The two lethal scorpions, (one is shown in photo 2-B: *Centruroides gertschi*) are very similar. The clue to the difference between them and the non-lethal one (photo 2-A) can be seen in the tail. The lethal scorpions have more slender segments in their tails. The tails of the others are noticeably plumper, and some have stripes, as in photo 2-A which is the common striped-tailed scorpion (*Vejovis spinigerus*). Another clue is size. The lethal scorpions are usually smaller than the non-lethal.

Photo 3-A



Photo 2-B

#### Pair Three

The tarantula (*Aphonopelma sp.*) in photo 3-A may look dangerous, but again, his sting is no worse than that of a bee. Actually he is nothing but a large wolf spider. These spiders are not at all aggressive, and in some localities of the Southwest, children even let them crawl on their arms and are very rarely bitten.

Photo 3-B is the sinister black widow. The hour glass on her abdomen is a pretty good clue to this one, but don't depend on it. Some widows lack this marking. And some widows, especially young ones, are not a smooth shiny black. Many have various whitish markings on the back. But there is one thing you can depend on with black widows: their bite is poisonous.

Photo 3-B



## Pair Four

Neither of these creatures is deadly, but the tall tales that have been spun around them have caused them to be feared by a great many people.

Photo 4-A is the desert centipede (*Scelopendra heros*). His looks are enough to terrify anyone, especially when he is a

large 8 or 10 inch specimen. While it is true that he can give you a painful bite, it is doubtful that he could put you in the hospital.

Photo 4-B is the common solpugid (*Eremobates sp.*), seen frequently around houses. He is an entirely harmless little fellow whose only interest as he stalks through the night, is in searching for other insects to eat. □

Photo 4-A



Photo 4-B



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# Digging for Sharkteeth

by Max Ferguson



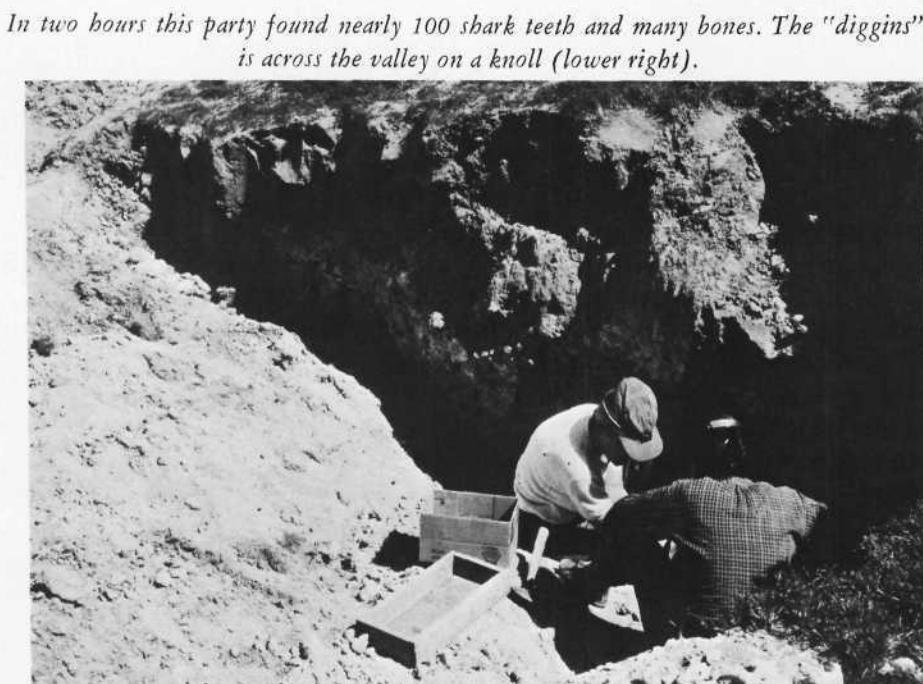
HE weather is mild, the desert is in bloom; spring is here! What better time could there be to go to the famed Sharktooth Hill Area and dig fossil shark's teeth? On Sharktooth Hill, just north of Bakersfield, you will find many treasures of the past. Though the favorite find is a shark tooth, the bigger the better, collectors also take home bones of seals, sea lions, whales, porpoises, fish and birds. Teeth and bones are found in a layer of soft to medium hard, gray sandstone. This layer is known as the Round Mountain Silt member (Mid-Miocene) of the Temblor Formation. Why there are so many bones packed into such a small area, and why they are so mixed up is a mystery unanswered by geologists.

However, some likely theories have been advanced. At first it was thought that violent volcanic action was responsible for the tremendous number of marine deaths, but after it was realized that carcasses covered with volcanic ash were preserved intact, this theory was set aside. Then it was pondered that a 150-foot reigning whale-shark was responsible for the deaths and for the scattering of bones. However, no teeth marks have been found on the buried bones to substantiate this argument.

Later theories suggest that an inland bay once covered the area, with restricted passageways to the sea. At one end of the bay was a submarine valley far offshore. Only the fine sand material could be carried this distance into the bay and deposited, thus the build-up of the Round Mountain Silt Formation. Fairly

strong currents moved from one end of the bay to the other. As the animals died, the currents carried the floating, decaying carcasses along the shallower parts of the bay, but as the currents crossed the submarine valley, they could no longer hold their loads so dropped them into the recesses below. Some twenty million years later, as we dig, we are exposing the bones just as they fell into this gray, soft material.

It is a pleasant drive from Los Angeles along U.S. Highway 99 to Bakersfield when the desert is springing to life. This may be an all-day field trip, or you can camp overnight at the site for an entire weekend to explore the area. To get there, turn right at Bakersfield onto Business Route 99 (Union Avenue) and head into the city. As you approach the traffic circle, follow the signs to Oildale;



*In two hours this party found nearly 100 shark teeth and many bones. The "diggins" is across the valley on a knoll (lower right).*



they will lead you onto Chester Avenue heading north. In a short distance you will notice on your left the Kern County Museum and Pioneer Village.

A stop in the museum is worth your time. It is open from 8 to 5 Monday through Friday, from 9 to 5 Saturday, Sunday and holidays. Immediately on your left in the main room are display cases with fossil teeth, bones, and information about each. There are many other fine exhibits in the museum, including a fine mineral display on the second floor. Free maps of the Sharktooth Hill area and papers covering the technical aspect of its geology and paleontology are also available.

After leaving the museum, continue north on Chester Avenue. Turn right on the China Grade Loop Road. From this intersection it is 12 miles to the new and better "diggings" on Round Mountain. Follow the road through the old Kern Oil Fields, past Discovery Well (the first hand-dug commercial oil well in the country), past a rock crusher plant and under two towering power lines to an oiled road (9.0 miles) that goes to the left where you will see the Tidewater Oil Company sign. Follow the oiled road for little under a mile to the junction of another road to the left. The sign at this junction reads: Private Road, Permission To Pass Revokable at Any Time. Tidewater Oil Company. Travel 1.4 miles on this road through the low rolling hills to a sharp, blind curve. In this curve make a left over the edge to a good dirt road. Three to four-tenths of a mile further, you are there. Get out, pick an unoccupied hole, and start digging.

Hand digging tools are essential for any kind of successful operation. These should include shovel, mattock, rake, a quarter-inch wire screen, hand pick, and smaller cleaning implements, if you wish to clean some of the bones at the site.

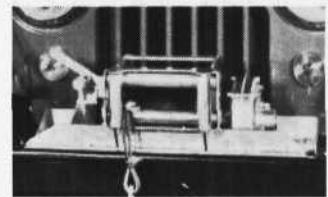
Though the hills are green, this is desert country. Bring lots of water, wear a hat, a light long-sleeved shirt, gloves for digging, and you should have no trouble. You will not go home with the bumper dragging the ground, but your collection will be one to be proud of and your knowledge of the past will be increased.

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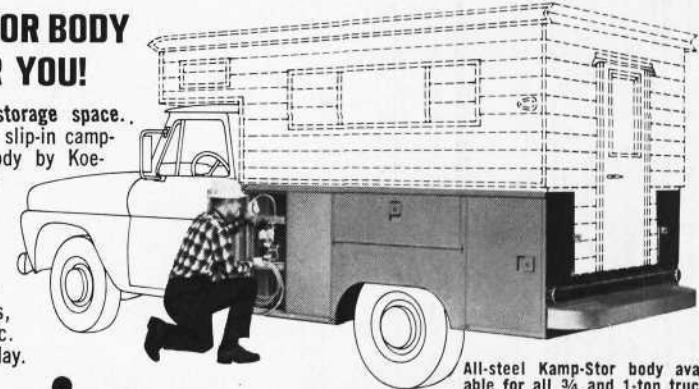


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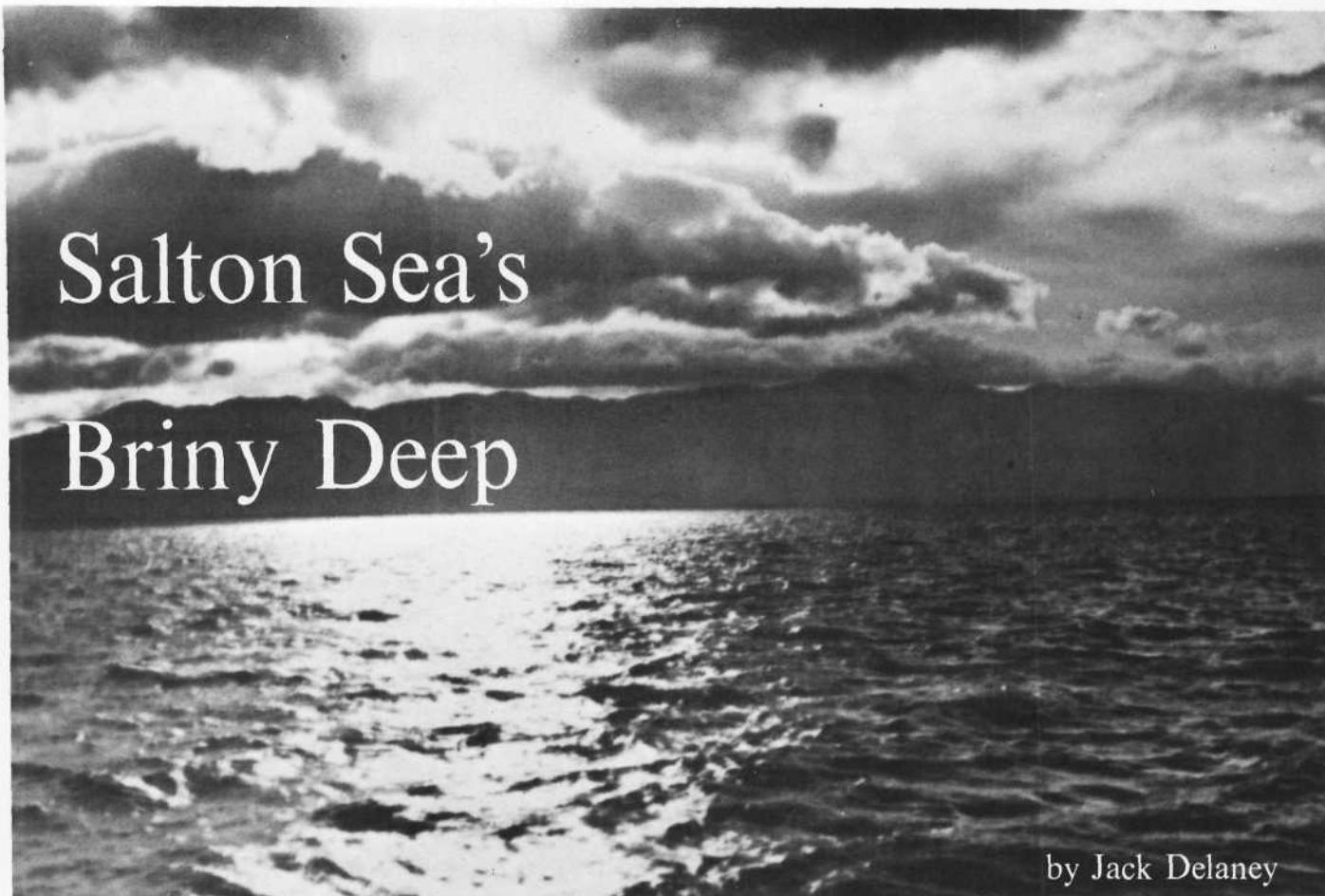
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# Salton Sea's Briny Deep

by Jack Delaney



HE nautical natives of the Salton Sea area may be the salt of the earth, but they have a problem — the salt of the sea! They are swimming, water skiing, sailing, boating and fishing these days with crossed fingers. The Sea is salinating like mad—at the rate of about 10,000 tons of salt per day. This largest inland body of water in California is headed for the doubtful distinction of becoming another Great Salt Lake, if corrective action is not taken soon.

Salton Sink is a natural reservoir for storage of drainage water from the gross Salton watershed, which comprises some 6500 square miles of Southern California desert land plus about 1000 square miles of Baja California, Mexico. The Sea is approximately 30 miles in length and varies from 10 to 15 miles in width. It has an average depth of 30 feet and a surface elevation of about 232 feet below mean sea level.

In recent years the area has developed into a recreation center for water sports, hunting, camping, hiking and rock hunt-

ing. Fishing and boating are the most popular pastimes here. You may angle the year 'round (there is no closed season) and the fish are in plentiful supply. It is estimated that more than three million corvina currently await your challenge. They love to play "hard to get," but they are not too anti-social to multiply prolifically. The corvina is a second cousin of the white sea bass.

A California State Park along the northeast shoreline provides several miles of scenic campsites for visitors. Also, along the east side of the Sea, is the State's Imperial Waterfowl Management Area. The United States Government's National Wildlife Refuge occupies several square miles at the southeastern corner of the Sea. This is near a large area containing geothermal resources, and across from the United States Naval Test Base on the southwest shoreline.

The Salton Sea has been called "Nature's Magnificent Mistake." There is no doubt that it is magnificent, but the mistake might be questioned. If Mother Nature erred in forming the present Sea, she is guilty of many other fumbling episodes in the past. In prehistoric times

the Salton Sink was a part of the Gulf of California and separated from it on several occasions. When it was isolated from the Gulf for the last time a large lake resulted (referred to as Lake Cahuilla) which may have continued to exist until as late as 300 or 400 years ago.

There is abundant evidence of the invasion of the Colorado Desert by the ocean many years before recorded history. It is pointed out in *The Mysterious West* (a fascinating book by Brad Williams and Choral Pepper) that the Salton Sink contains a vast oyster-shell bed formed during one of the Sink's unions with the Gulf. These petrified shells of the ruffled oyster, averaging eight inches across, have been here millions of years. Helen Burns, in her booklet *Salton Sea Story*, reports that there are many square miles of marine fossil beds here and that some of them are 200 feet thick.

If we are determined to point the finger at Mother Nature we might ask why she trapped some 200-million-acre-feet of ocean water in Lake Cahuilla, then permitted it to evaporate, leaving

approximately nine billion tons of salt which did not evaporate! Another example of Nature's muddled thinking is the fact that she set up a row of four small volcanoes along what is now the southwest shore of the Sea, then proceeded to cover them with water. They bubbled and steamed in protest, forming mud pots that were conspicuous in the area for years.

Men with imagination tried to turn the Salton Sink situation to their advantage on several occasions. In 1884 the New Liverpool Salt Company started production, utilizing the heavy deposits in the northwest part of the basin. This enterprise ended abruptly in 1905 when water returned to the Sink. Another commercial venture was born about 40 years ago when it was discovered that enough carbon dioxide was obtainable from wells to support a dry-ice business, with the Los Angeles area serving as the market. It passed away quietly a short time later.

In 1901 a heading was built on the Colorado River and a canal to convey water to Imperial Valley was constructed, entirely within Baja California, Mexico. This canal still exists and is called Canal del Alamo. Heavy floods of the Colorado and Gila Rivers in 1905 and 1906 cut through the headworks, enlarged the conveyance channel, and flooded Salton Sink. So sudden was this onslaught that a string of freight cars was trapped on a siding next to the sprawling Liverpool Salt Works. The cars and the factory still remain at the bottom of the Salton Sea!

At the present time this area might be called a paradise with problems. Four situations exist that threaten the continuity of aquatic enjoyment for the residents, week-enders and vacationers. These four basic problems are: an alarming increase in salinity, an increase in the concentration of nutrients, an excessive deposit of silt, and an unpredictable fluctuation of surface elevation.

In recent years the salt content of the sea has increased to the point where it is now greater than that of ocean water. Salton Sea has no drainage outlet—infow of farm drainage waters from adjacent valleys is approximately balanced by surface evaporation. However, the salts remain in the sea water. Unless measures are taken to control salinity, the

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sea will become so salty that the fishery will be seriously damaged within a few years. Also, excessive salinity will adversely affect the shoal grass which is established as food for waterfowl.

Farm drainage waters also bring nutrients that remain in the sea, and this concentration promotes algae blooms. Besides causing an increase in turbidity,

trol Board and a current study was completed a few months ago for the Resources Agency of California. The reports from both studies stressed that water quality control measures must be instituted at the earliest possible date if preservation of the sports fishery and water-conducted sports features of Salton Sea are to be realized.

evaporates, the salts would be retained permanently within the diked basin. This plan would provide some degree of control of the Salton Sea surface elevation. It is anticipated that the 29-square-mile section would become filled with salt after about 75 years.

Another suggested plan would also involve construction of a diked area, utilized to concentrate inflow from the sea's main body. The concentrated brine would be pumped southward across the International Boundary to the Rio Hardy. The pumping distance would be 55 to 60 miles, with a lift of 270 feet above the Salton Sea surface. Thereafter the brine would flow by gravity into the river and on to the Gulf of California. The Rio Hardy, in Mexico, is one of the many former courses of the Colorado River.

This plan would require consent from the Republic of Mexico, which should not be too difficult to obtain (the discharge of waste waters from Mexico into the Salton Sea amounts to approximately 104,000-acre-feet each year). Advantages of this system would be the permanent nature of the solution to water quality control in the sea and a possible perman-



*Along the shoreline of Salton Sea. Below: Scene from Helen's Beach.*

the algae is suspected to be the principal cause of a "red tide" which sometimes covers a portion of the sea surface. Periodically, conditions in Salton Sea cause extensive death of algae. This in turn results in oxygen deficiency, which is responsible for extensive fish kills and the production of obnoxious odors.

A quantity of silt is being conveyed regularly to the sea through natural channels and irrigation drains. Excessive silt deposits have an effect on sea dimensions and turbidity. The somewhat unstable surface elevation of this body of water has a threatening effect on existing improvements along the shoreline and poses uncertainties in planning for further development. Some early settlers learned this the hard way. They had to wade out of their homes!

Serious thought is being given to the solution of these problems. Six meetings on the subject were held last year, with all interested factions represented—federal, state, local and private. A comprehensive study was conducted in 1965 for the California State Water Quality Con-



Several plans offered as possible solutions were outlined in the above reports. One involved the diking off of an area of approximately 29 square miles within the sea. Water from the main body would be directed into the diked area at a controlled rate. As the isolated water

ent outlet for waste brines from geothermal enterprises as they develop in the future. It would also provide a measure of control of the sea's surface elevation.

Many other proposals have been offered from various sources. Some may be feasible, others are too far out in concept

or too costly to be practical. One involves a desalting plant, a ship canal from the Gulf of California, an inland seaport for ocean-going vessels, a power plant at the sea to generate electricity from a 200-foot waterfall, and the use of part of the power to pump back the concentrated salt of the sea. This exciting plan, the brainchild of consulting engineer Philip Abrams, would result in an exciting cost figure.

Still another idea, this time from Mr. A. B. West of the United States Bureau of Reclamation, with the hedge that it is proposed as a "last resort" solution, suggests an ocean-water transfusion for Salton Sea via a two-way pipeline to the ocean. Mr. West did not explain how a continuous exchange of salt water from the ocean for salt water from the sea would solve the salination problem. It is estimated that the cost of his plan would be about 55 million dollars.

During discussions with Assemblyman Victor Veysey of California's 75th Assembly District it was obvious that he has a keen interest in the solution of this problem. In January he introduced a bill asking the State Legislature to finance a study of the problems which would lead to firm recommendations for a practical solution. Some time, and a number of committee luncheons, will be required before the outcome will be known.

Assemblyman Veysey evidently is serious in his desire to serve the Southern Californians who feel the need for Salton Sea as a recreational center. An indication of his attitude toward the subject is expressed in Section 15 of his bill, which reads (in part): "This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety within the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go into immediate effect."

During your visits to Salton Sea, should you time-out from the aquatic fun long enough to discuss problems, you'll note an apparent defensive attitude on the part of the residents. Perhaps this is because the situation is beyond the reach of individuals. I sensed this feeling on the part of "Sea" people during my interviews along the shoreline. Typical remarks were, "What's wrong with salt? I like salt!" and "Why all the fuss about our Sea? There are problems everywhere, what about the large cities!"

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# THE FREEDOM PLACES

by Robert Townsend



*Soft sandy roads are treacherous.*



TO SEE the mountains, the trees and the ocean as they have been for thousands of years, without super highways and designated picnic areas, is the dream of many a man who loves freedom. Running water and an electric and gas hook-up at each concrete slab pad may fulfill some dreams, but not his. There are a few beautiful places left which have not become commercialized. Remote places in Mexico are among these places. Here there are miles and miles of beautiful beaches practically untouched by people, as well as extraordinary inland country and mountains.

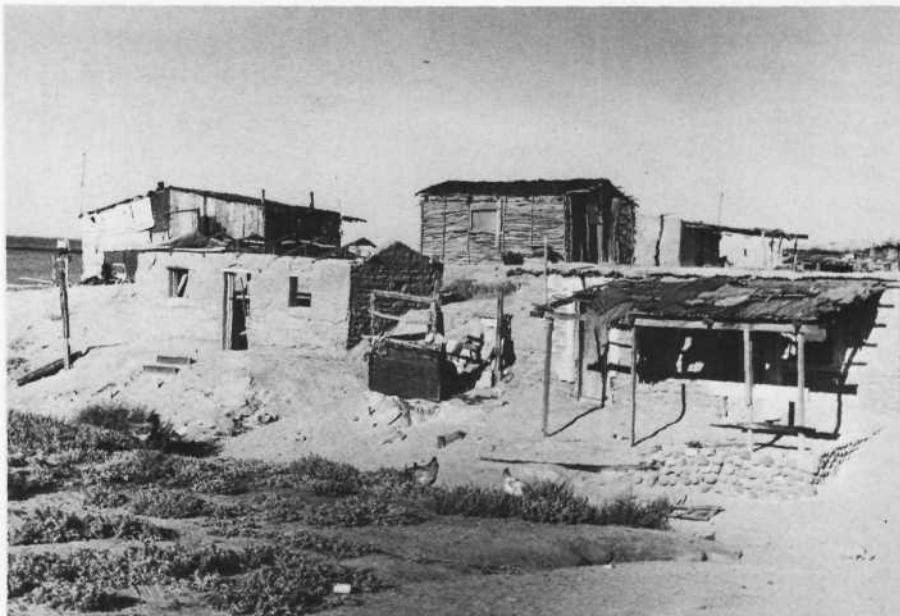
It was to seek such a spot on the Sonora, Mexico, shore that we left Tucson on the Easter week-end and turned south toward Libertad. In Spanish, Libertad means liberty or freedom, which is an appropriate name for this village.

The road is long, slow and dirty, but we enjoyed every mile of it. From Pitiquito, Sonora, on to the ocean many roads take off from the dirt one we were following and several times we took a

wrong turn because there are no markers or signs to direct you to the next city, but finding our own way added to our fun. In places the sand was so soft that the cars could not get through without a little manpower. Our group consisted of 21 people and six vehicles. This way, if a car got stuck or had mechanical trouble, there were enough people to

help it out. We carried additional gasoline, emergency tools, fresh water and plenty of food.

Upon arriving at Libertad after the long day's drive, we found about a dozen adobe houses situated less than 200 yards from the waterfront. The few people who make this their home seem to enjoy their relaxed way of living. The



*Adobe and other type dwellings belong to fishermen.*

menfolk go fishing and the women and children tend the house and chickens. There is no electricity, nor modern conveniences of any type. There are no stores; not even a gas station.

In addition to the unpopulated beaches, cardon cactus and boojum trees contribute to the beauty of the setting. Cardon are a massive cactus related to the giant saguaro, but unlike it, the cardon has a central trunk where outstretched arms begin about a foot above the ground. They live to be quite old and as they grow older, they become more massive and taller. Birds like to build nests at the very top of their arms which, to us, at least, seemed a precarious perch.

The boojum in Sonora grows within a square mile area about seven miles to the south of Libertad. Here they grow profusely and abundantly. Native to Baja California, it is a mystery how they arrived here on the east side of the Gulf of California. Dotting the hillsides, these "inverted carrots" look like no other tree in the world, although it is related to the equally strange ocotillo that bears similar green leaves when it rains. Large boojums grow as high as 40 feet with just one main trunk, larger at the bottom than at the top. Sometimes, if the tip has been broken, small branches appear there, giving an appearance of roots reaching into the sky instead of the ground.

One evening in camp we were visited by the Seri Indians. Wearing what was once bright colored clothing, these barefoot women with their children hoped to trade shell jewelry and birds and fish they had carved from ironwood for food and clothing. Not having anticipated visitors, we were not prepared to give them clothing, but we did give them apples, oranges and candy bars. They talked a dialect of Spanish we could not understand, but we could see the appreciation in their eyes and smiles. Their visit was the highlight of our week-end. They do not live at Libertad, but travel up and down the coast to sell or trade their goods to campers, we learned later.

After our relaxing week-end, we headed once again toward the city with its freeways and signs indicating streets, or ramps and exits. Modern conveniences may have their places, but our favorite vacation places are the ones without them. □

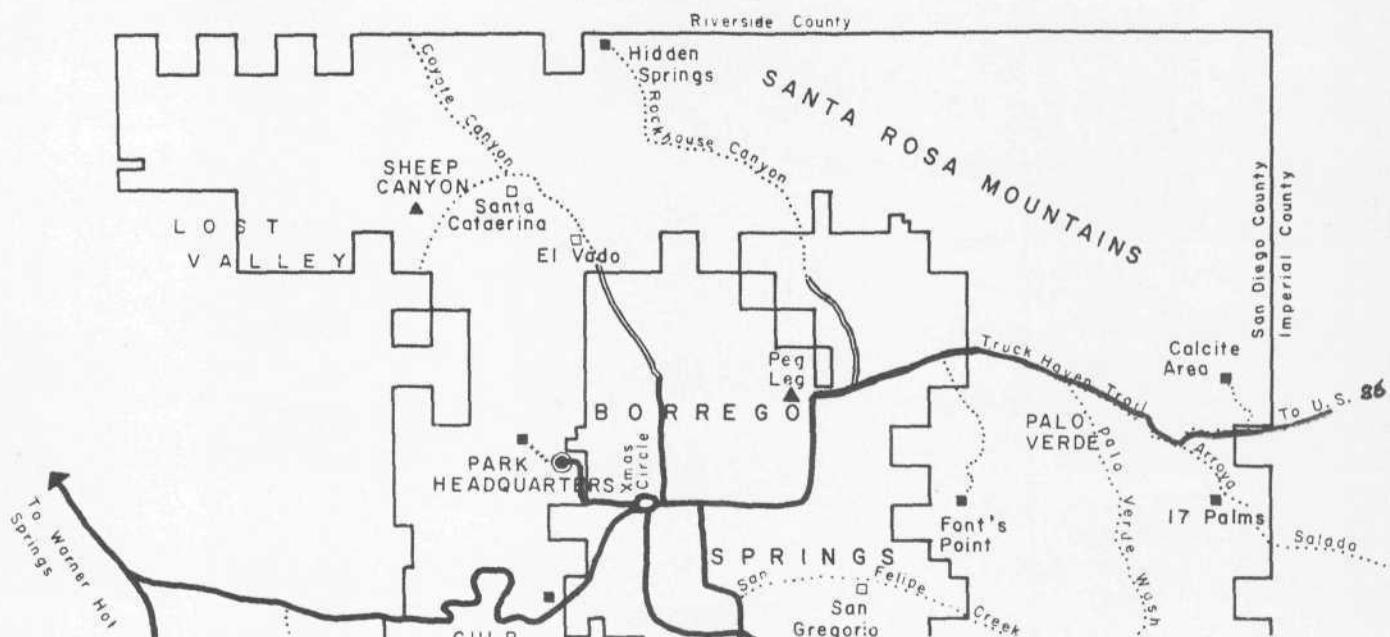


*Above: Seri Indians came to our camp to beg for food and clothing. Below: Boojum trees grow in small area seven miles south of Libertad. How they arrived within this one-square-mile area is a mystery.*



# The Pegleg Trail to Adventure

by Choral Pepper



IT WAS three years ago last month that the anonymous finder of the Pegleg black gold nuggets told his story to DESERT Magazine.

It was ten years prior to this disclosure that he made his actual discovery. Thousands of Pegleg "experts" have since come to the DESERT Magazine bookshop where some of the nuggets are on display to examine them and offer opinions as to their original source. In spite of this, when television producer Jack Smith and his associate, Don Flocken, invited us to work with them on a Pegleg episode for their new travel series, TRAILS TO ADVENTURE, I had to confess that the puzzle is as incongruous today as it was three years ago.

Each Pegleg expert favors a special area he is certain is the right one; each expert has his own explanation for the phenomenal occurrence of black gold where none has ever been mined; each has his own favorite Pegleg Smith, usually one of three historical characters known to have roamed the Colorado desert on a wooden leg; and each Pegleg expert is vehemently positive that his theory is the right one. Mystics have held seances over the subject, dowsers have swung pendulums over the nuggets to

trace their source by vibration, old prospectors have paced the country within the stipulated 30 miles of the Salton Sea, modern ones have covered it in 4-wheel drive vehicles or sand buggies, geologists have studied almost every foot of terrain in all directions and geographers have mapped it from the air. Still, the only black nuggets to be seen are those

displayed in the DESERT Magazine bookshop.

As editor of this magazine I have probably listened to more black gold theories than have most other writers. This has led to a few conclusions; chiefly, where it isn't at!

I doubt that the Pegleg hot spot is in the popularly considered Chocolate

*Jack Smith and Don Flocken work on segment of new TV series which will feature Pegleg's gold.*



Mountains, or in other restricted military ranges adjacent to or within the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, also a popular site. There are reasons for these doubts. Our modern Mr. Pegleg found his nuggets barely eight years following World War II. He wasn't prospecting; he was simply enjoying the desert wild flowers and collecting a few rocks. At that time these bombing ranges had not yet been even partially cleaned up. No man with an ounce of sense was going to risk having his head blown off by a live dud just to sniff a wildflower. Our Mr. Pegleg has shown in a number of ways that he is a man of good sense.

As for the site lying within the one-half-million acres of the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, I have my doubts about that, too. At the time our modern Pegleg made his find, much of this area had not yet been included in the park. In his letters he stated that he had neglected to stake a claim because if his black gold-covered hills went on record, it might attract attention to them. He then proceeded to return year after year to accumulate more loot, removing its black covering and disposing of the gold to collectors and gold buyers in Alaska. Within a year of his discovery, thousands of additional acres were officially declared park territory and Anza-Borrego achieved the stature it holds today. If Mr. Pegleg's rich mounds were included within these boundaries, it is unlikely that he would have risked the penalty for removing loot from a state park following his initial coup, especially at a time when the new park was being publicized.

After discussing Pegleg myths and facts with Jack Smith, we concluded that the most tangible satisfaction in the Pegleg story is the fun of the search. With that in mind, we set about proving our point. Although my own "expert" selection for the Pegleg gold site lies within a stretch slightly north of US 80 near Ocotillo and descends obliquely southeast toward Yuha Wells, we succumbed to the late Henry Wilson's expert theory because of the facility of travel along newly paved Truckhaven Road.

Thus, equipped with the DESERT Magazine sand buggy, a variety of passenger cars, metal detectors, television cameras and other related gear, we set forth to pit our luck against that of all

other Pegleggers. Like the modern Pegleg, we didn't go into a grand production of setting up camps, packing food, etcetera. We just decided to play it straight and hope we'd stumble upon gold during a single day's outing to smell the flowers.

After following US 86 south from Indio, California, through the date groves and on past Salton Sea resorts, we at last came upon an unlimited horizon of barren desert broken only by the bulk of a gas station-restaurant named Truckhaven. This institution is destined to play an important part in the literary future of tales about the old Truckhaven Road, which takes off to the west of it. Unfortunately, the historic Truckhaven Trail is about to become the old Truckhaven Grail. Now that it is paved, an eager mind in the highway department

has decided to change its name to something innocuous like Borrego-Salton Sea Way.

But the reason the Truckhaven restaurant is destined for fame is because the late Edwin Corle, one of our finest desert writers, immortalized it in *Desert Country* as an example of the sort of place that occurs only in isolated desert spaces broken by naked streaks of highway. As he sped along one of those naked streaks, the emptiness suddenly exploded into a sign reading "Grand Opening Sat. Nite." Now Edwin Corle was a man of the world. An Easterner turned Californian who had begun his career as a motion picture writer, he had attended a few grand openings in his day. However, he had never attended one at the Truckhaven Gas Station-Restaurant, so he decided to stop over for the "nite."

*Mounds near Palm Wash are believed by many Pegleg "authorities" to be the site of the black gold discovery.*



His description of the juke box that played endless renditions of *The Man Who Came To Our House*, of the bartender's stock answer to tourists who asked, "How hot does it get down here?" and of Mac, the proprietor who spoke only to the regulars, is classic. As Corle wrote, this wasn't exactly a flower of the westward movement, but it was a part of the result—a contemporary phenomenon related to the ultimate reality of the now. It had its place and it filled it—a haven for truckdrivers. Today truckdrivers have a greater range of desert havens and the trail for which the station-restaurant was named has been paved and renamed. Soon the gas station-restaurant will reflect that change. It will expand into a grand desert spa named Rancho Borrego-Salton Sea Way with therapeutic pools and computer mating.

Even now it has changed since Corle's day, in 1940. We ordered sandwiches to take with us and, while we waited, a cold drink. The juke box still bangs out hit tunes, but a new cult is shadowing up to Truckhaven. While she tucked crisp lettuce into turkey and cheese sandwiches, our waitress gave us the low-down on the food value contained in the packaged sunflower seeds she sells from the counter. We acquired an immediate addiction.

Actually, the Truckhaven Trail has been historic for less than 40 years. In 1929 Doc Beaty, an early homesteader and promoter of Borrego Valley, conceived the idea of a wagon road along the fringe of the Santa Rosa Mountains between the badlands and the mountains in order to facilitate travel between Borrego Valley and Coachella Valley. Local merchants donated money, food, mules, equipment and labor and soon the road was started. Hardly had it been completed when sudden storms gashed the grades leading in and out of washes and gutted the roadbed. Further maintenance was out of the question, until the area became a state park and the grades were kept open by bulldozers. Travel along it was still confined to sand buggies and 4-wheelers, however. But now passenger car motorists can visit this extraordinary terrain where awesome views of delicately tinted badlands cascade into sandy, palm-strewn washes, surrounded on all sides by miles of sun-varnished

rock similar to the Pegleg gold. These areas exist both within and without the perimeter of the park, but if you happen to stumble upon a mound covered with black nuggets within it, you'd be breaking the law if you carried a few of them home.

To avoid this temptation while filming Jack Smith's *TRAILS TO ADVENTURE*, we parked our cars east of the park boundary and proceeded by sand buggy toward a clump of palms barely visible above the banks of Palm Wash, off to our right.

According to *DESERT Magazine*'s founder, Randall Henderson, the most serious Peglegophile of all time was the late Henry Wilson, an aristocratic, scholarly and professionally respected hotel man from San Diego. Wilson searched

the Borrego badlands of Southern California for years in search of the historic Pegleg black gold. There was probably no mound larger than an ant hill he hadn't examined—and this in raw rugged land. Before his death in the 1950s he concluded that Pegleg Smith found his legendary nuggets somewhere in the vicinity of this wash. Palm Wash, where we were headed now in our sand buggy, was where Wilson used to establish his camp. At that time a spring bubbled there and, of course, wherever palm trees are found there is water, but now the spring runs underground.

In 1936 Randall Henderson counted 22 mature Washingtonia palms and five young ones growing along this wash. We were so busy looking for black gold and contemplating camera angles that

*Palm Canyon in Anza-Borrego park lies at the end of a self-guided hiking trail.*



we failed to count those remaining today, but the number is far less. Rockhounds comb this area for petrified wood and concretion fantasies that are constantly weathering out of the sedimentary deposits of the clay hills. We found one concretion that just has to be the petrified horn of a unicorn, but the most common ones are shaped like cannonballs and snowmen.

After our work with the TV film was completed, we followed the remainder of the newly paved road from the serpentine maze of badlands framing Palm Wash on to Borrego Springs, an 18-mile trek which opens up fabulous desert views for motorists and eliminates 25 miles from the roundabout route formerly necessary to travel between Borrego Valley and Coachella Valley, where Indio and Palm Springs are located.

As the road serpentine up into the badlands, the distant waters of Salton Sea shrink into a sapphire splotch amid mounds of platinum and gold-colored sands. Up ahead, interesting areas such as Cannonball Wash, Smoke Tree Wash, Palo Verde Wash, Font's Point and the Pegleg Monument are marked by road signs. Cannonball Wash refers to the sandstone concretions that litter the slope of the wash. Composed of a substance harder than that of surrounding material, the sculptures have resisted normal erosion and the unknown process that accounts for their strange shapes is one of the mysteries of the desert.

Smoke Tree Wash should really be visited on a moonlit night. The ultimate in ethereal beauty on earth, these feathery trees are of the pea family and grow only in areas periodically watered by flash floods. The hard outer coatings of their seeds must be abraded by water and sand action in order to germinate. I have never heard of anyone successfully transplanting a wild one, but when started from seed they often do well in captivity. Their thick, purple flowers appear in mid-June when the desert is beginning to grow unpleasantly hot, so few travelers ever witness this unique forest in bloom.

As the road's altitude increases, you are soon looking down upon the Borrego badlands instead of up at them, as you were from Palm Wash. In places the shoreline of an ancient lake is visible. Layers of mud deposited by this

lake were later uplifted by earth movements and then carved into V-shaped mazes by cloudbursts to create the multi-hued strata of the badlands. Late evening shadows throw the scheme into a chromatic scale of shadowy passages and eerie echoes. Coyotes, rabbits, gophers and foxes may lurk among them now, but fossil evidence proves that mammoths and primitive horses roamed the shores of the ancient lake several million years ago.

At the edge of Borrego Springs you will come upon the Pegleg Monument. Its name doesn't mean that the famed horsethief actually found his black gold here, nor that he even cooled his heels in this hot spot. There is a custom, however, by which you honor the legend by adding a rock to a cairn started by a group of desert oldtimers who used to celebrate here each New Year's Eve. Doc Beaty, who established the Truckhaven Trail, was among these *bon vivants* and the plaque on the monument will tell you all about it.

The community of Borrego Springs is a happy mixture of natural desert and civilized comforts. There are fine motor lodges and resorts with swimming pools and restaurants as well as a shopping mall, a country club and a number of real estate offices. The highlight of our visit was in meeting Park naturalist Maurice Getty and Supervisor Wesley Cater at the Anza-Borrego Desert Park Headquarters located at the west end of town. From them we learned of the self-guided tour brochures for both hiking and auto trips that are available from their office.

We also corrected a misconception we had long held in regard to camping within the Park. We had believed camping here was confined to the prescribed camp grounds designated by the Park Department. Now we learned that you are permitted to camp anywhere you choose. Camp fires are frowned upon unless they are contained, but you can build one in a large barbecue basin, if you have one, but bring the material you burn into the park with you. Last October the rules concerning dogs were changed, so now you can keep your pet with you overnight so long as you keep him on a leash and away from established campgrounds and areas of special activity, such as hiking trails. Vehicles

are permitted on all old trails and may run the washes, but, of course, breaking new trails through other virgin land is not permitted.

Of the self-guided tours, I especially liked the Palm Canyon hike. The trail is marked, but not so obviously that it lacks adventure. Being a "strider" rather than an "ambler," I separated from my group and several times debated whether the trail snaked around a boulder spotted like an Appaloosa's rear or through an arroyo studded with desert willow. Black lizards darted here and there and once something behind a barricade of rocks startled me at the same time I startled it; possibly a kit fox, as it sounded too large to be a mouse.

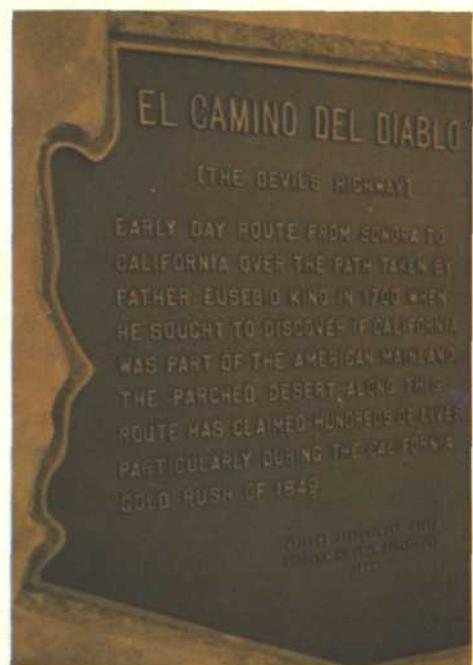
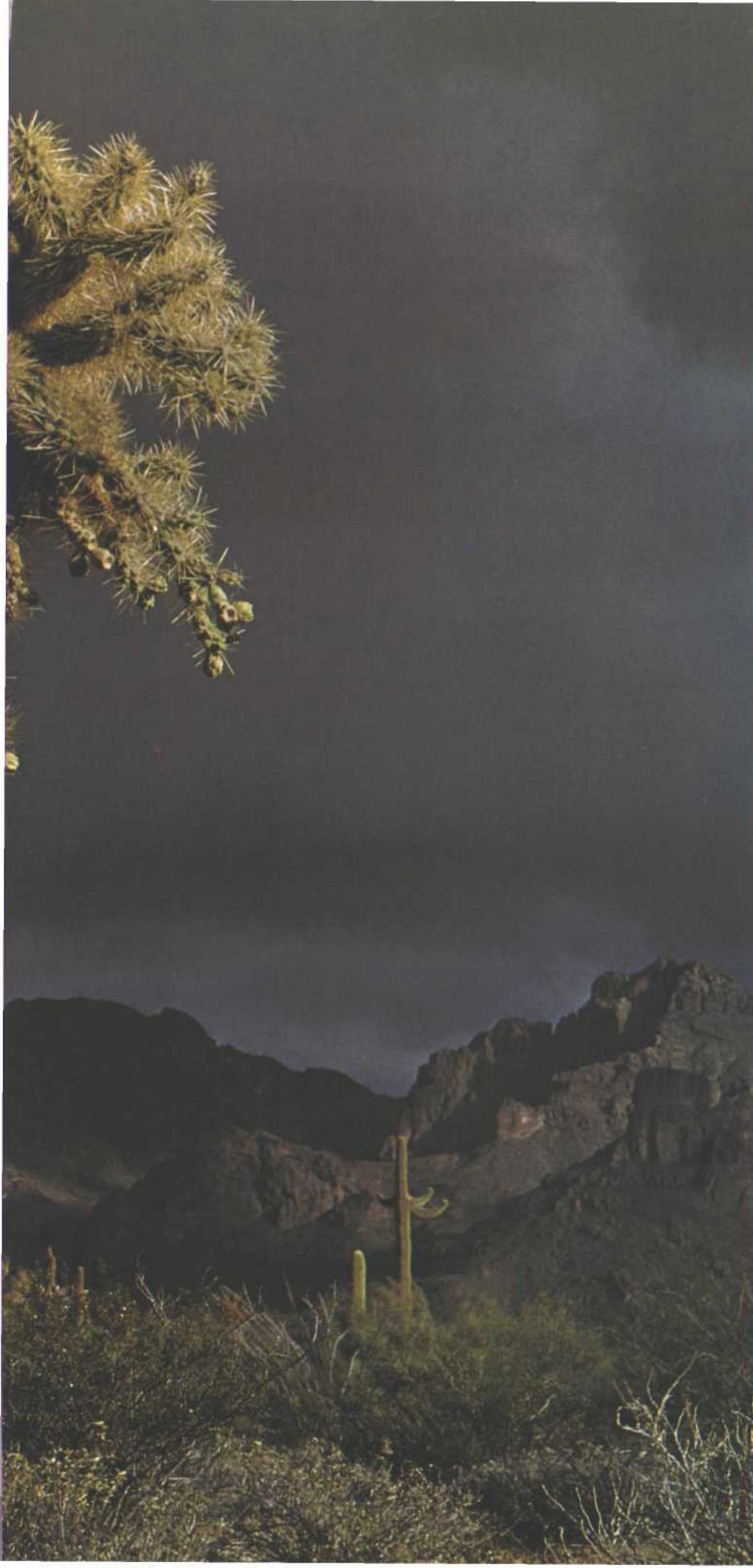
After hiking about one-and-a-half miles, you come suddenly upon the palm oasis. Nestled within a crevice between two mountainous masses of jumbled rock, an immense grove of *Washingtonia filifera* fan palms casts spiky shadows over a stream that bounces lazily across sand and rock until it is swallowed underground a short distance later. I stretched out on top of a granite boulder that straddled the stream. There are no noises in the world so refreshing as those of breeze-fed palm fronds and gurgling water, especially when the sky above you is blue and the granite boulder supporting you feels hard and cool against your skin. I searched the rocky ledges of the mountains for a glimpse of the bighorn sheep that live up there, but they are difficult to spot without binoculars, even when they are looking down at you.

Soon the voices of my companions signaled that it was time to return home if we wanted to catch a photo of the shadows on the badlands from Font's Point.

We didn't bring back any glittering loot, but Jack Smith and his TRAILS TO ADVENTURE crew filmed a lot of footage in color, including some of the nuggets sent to DESERT Magazine by the man who really did find Pegleg's black gold. And we did prove, off-film as well as on it, the point we hoped to make. A day's outing along old Truckhaven Road is itself as good as gold. □

Watch your local TV news for announcement of Jack Smith's Trails to Adventure.





## CHHOSTS; Do Not Disturb!

by Madeleine Rodack



**I**N THE year 1540 the burning sun of western Papagueria blazed down upon the helmets and breastplates of a cavalcade of Spanish soldiers plodding wearily across the wastes of sand and rock. Coronado, still filled with disappointment at finding only poor drab Indian villages in place of seven golden cities, had sent Captain Melchior Diaz to lead an expedition of exploration toward the West. And so it was that on a hot September day the first white men traveled the route of Camino del Diablo. Thanks to their Indian guides who knew the water holes, they reached the Colorado River. The rugged trail they blazed remained for future travelers to follow—Father Kino, Father Garcés, Juan Bautista de Anza, gold seekers and early settlers, one of whom was named Nameer. Tales of the hardships they endured gave the "Devil's Road" its forbidding name.

Tracks in the desert do not disappear easily.

The Camino del Diablo is still there today.

My husband, Juel, and I had long wanted to find out to what extent the modern world had intruded upon this ancient route. Inspired by the writings of former travelers—Father Kino's memoirs and his companion Manje's records; Carl Lumholtz, who followed the road in 1910; Godfrey Sykes, who drove it in the 1920s; later Harold Weight (DESERT, Sept. 1949) and Randall Henderson (DESERT, April 1940 and Jan.

1951)—we set out to explore it ourselves.

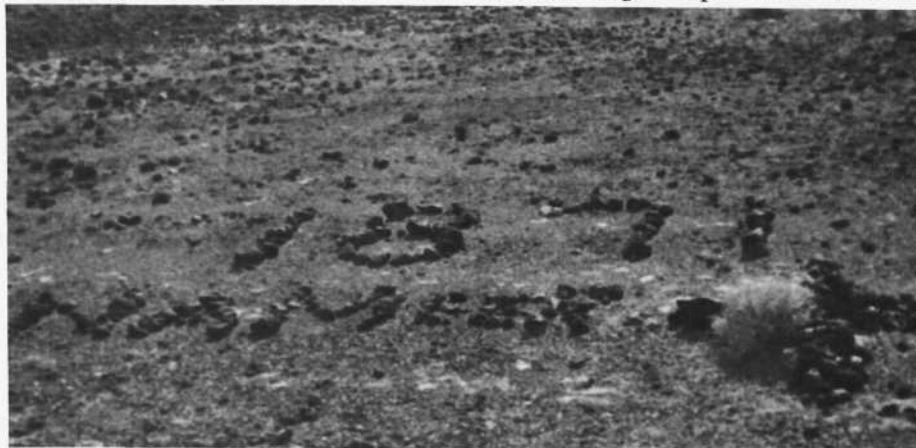
The Old Yuma Trail, as it was sometimes called, now lies within the jurisdiction not only of the Cabeza Prieta Game Refuge, but also of the Luke Air Force Bombing and Gunnery Range. They both gave us permission to enter, although they wouldn't guarantee that our Volkswagen bus would get through, even accompanied by a friendly jeep.

Coming in from Ajo through the back door of Organ Pipe Cactus National

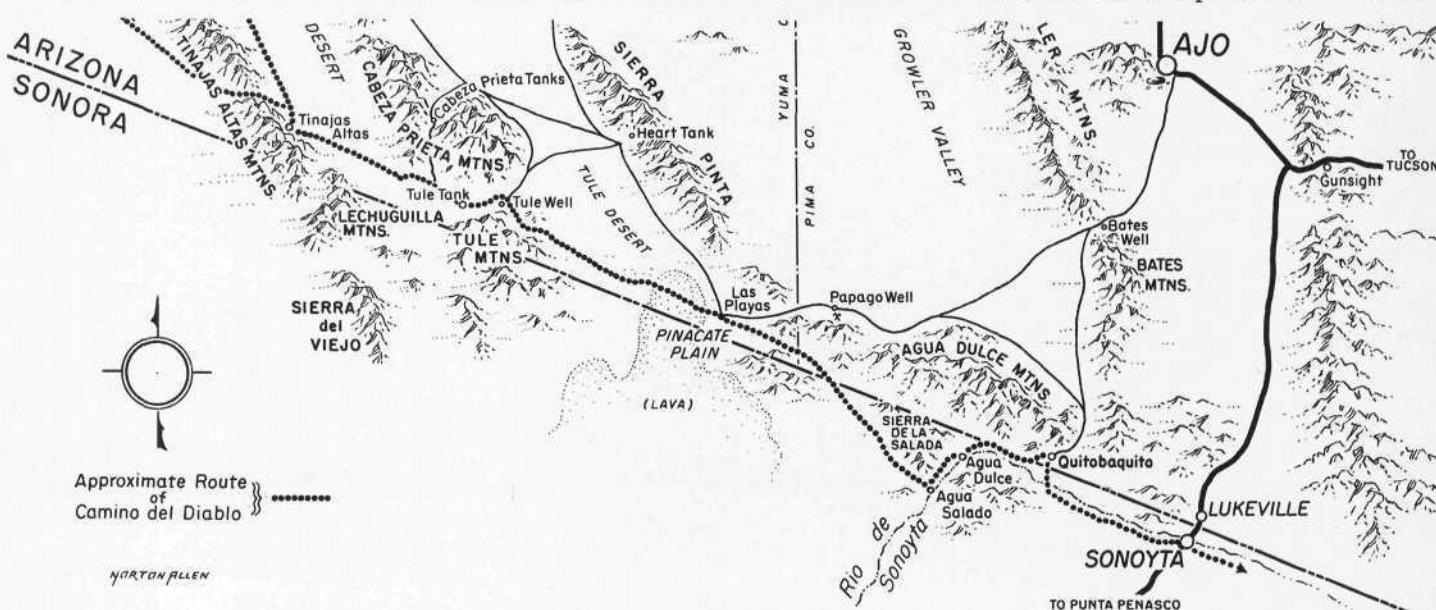
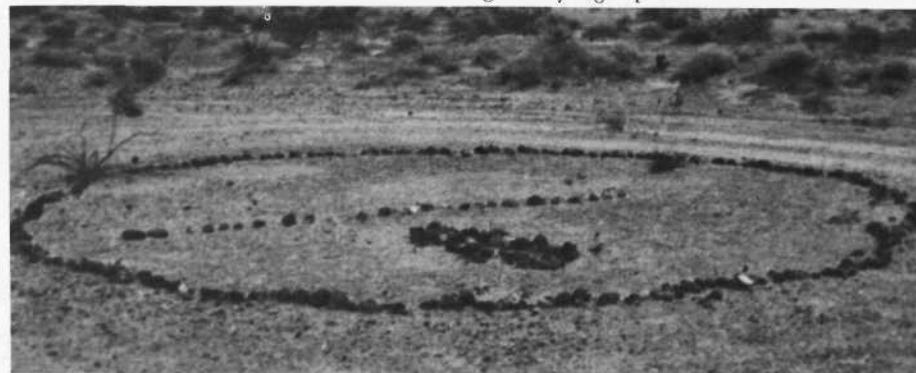
Monument, we found ourselves in wilderness before actually reaching the route of the Camino, which came up from below the border. We made Papago Well by lunch time and found there a modern pump bringing water into a tank complete with faucet. There was an old corral and the ruins of a building. An ancient rusty sign out on the desert facing north indicates U.S. customs on the right. The place was once used as a customs house and border crossing point. To our surprise, we found a California family camped there and enjoying the desert roads in a sand buggy towed behind their camper truck.

Though not yet on the old Camino, we soon came upon the first relic of the drama and tragedy of the desert. About two miles beyond Papago Well we found a pile of stones to the right of the road marked by a cross made of two strips of iron. On the back was written "David L. O'Neil." At this point our map showed the O'Neil Hills and O'Neil Pass and we wondered who this man had been who left his name so markedly on the area. We later learned he was a prospector who died there of exhaustion about 1916. When his burro wandered into Papago Well, his body was found and buried on the spot where he died.

Beyond the low pass, we came down into a sandy playa which we traversed, with our fingers crossed, until we reached the safety of a rocky mesa that spilled across the border from the Pinacate lava flow. Our map informed us that this road now was following the actual route of the Camino del Diablo. On the lava flow, we noticed a pattern of rocks laid



Above: Grave of the mysterious Nameer in the Pinacate lava flow. These stones have remained undisturbed for almost 100 years. Circle below lies near base of Tordillo Mountain and marks the grave of eight persons.



out which spelled the name "Nameer" and the date 1871. Beside them was a pile of stones in the shape of a cross. Who was Nameer? One man, or a family? And who placed these stones where they had lain for 97 years marking the grave? In the same area, embedded in the ground, were also rows of stones forming parts of squares and rectangular shapes, possibly bits of letters that might have marked other graves. Had disaster struck here in 1871, or were these the graves of lone travelers brought to die by strange coincidence in the same spot?

Crossing another sandy playa we paused to admire the glowing pinkish granite range of the Sierra Pinta and, ahead, forbidding Sierra de la Cabeza Prieta. As we approached the moun-



*The giant ironwood tree is still a landmark on the Camino. The Tinajas Altas loom in the background.*



*Some of the tanks hold a generous supply of water.*

tains, several branches of the Camino wound into low passes. We picked the most northerly, which looked like the best, and came upon another pile of stones, apparently a grave.

As the sun dropped low, we bounced into a small valley dominated by a windmill and two small buildings of corrugated iron. One is a cabin for Game Refuge personnel who stop here occasionally; the other is a neat little outhouse. Under the water tank of the windmill an enclosure contains a very practical, though primitive shower. This is Tule Well. Civilization had reached the Camino after all! A nearby hill is

crowned by a monument commemorating the dedication of the Game Refuge, including plaques from various Boy Scout troops. An old custom's house sign identified Tule Well as another former border crossing point.

We camped in a clump of trees in the middle of the clearing and enjoyed a sumptuous dinner cooked over a campfire while a brilliant moon illuminated our first night on the Old Yuma Trail.

Resisting the temptation to tackle a road to the north that led, according to a U.S. Geological Survey sign, to the Cabeza Prieta Tanks and uncertain water, we continued east. Though a sign

said only three miles to Tule Tank, it was not at that spot. A couple of roads to the right seemed possible, but while trying one of them we stuck in the deep sand of a long arroyo. After much digging, jacking-up and roadbuilding, we turned back and finally found a little track between the two roads that led to a narrow canyon a few hundred yards off the road. There a sign told us we were at Tule Tank.

A short walk up the drainage took us to a pleasant spot among the rocks, surrounded by vegetation and edged by a sandy beach. We recognized it as Tule Tank from the photograph in Lumholtz's *New Trails in Mexico*, but now there was no water. By digging about a foot down we managed to create enough of a pool to have bolstered the life of a parched traveler, though hardly enough to fill his water bottles. Up the canyon we did find a little water in a small tank, but quite inaccessible to a weary wayfarer.

There is some controversy as to whether Tule Tank is the one Kino calls the *Tinaja de la Luna*. Many feel that the *Tinaja de la Luna* is the Heart Tank in the Sierra Pinta, but the Game Refuge identifies it with Tule. Considering that Kino had to build a trail of rocks up to the tank for his mules to reach the water, it would seem that this is not the place, as it looks reasonably accessible to animals. Because of this, our vote went to Heart Tank.

To assist future travelers, we stopped

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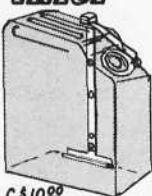
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back at the road and made a sign of rocks on the ground at the turn-off. We hope it will be durable enough to be of help.

In the Tule Tank area we found ourselves in a region of spectacular mountain formations where sharp white granite ranges contrast with neighboring peaks, like chocolate sundaes. It is the white rock at the base, capped by dark brown volcanic flows splashing down the sides in irregular streaks, that give it the name of Cabeza Prieta, or "Dark Head." Most spectacular along our route was Tordillo Mountain, a towering steep mesa with chocolate dripping down its sides. In the lava beds near this mountain there are interesting fields for rock-hunters and we spotted a beautiful cluster of garnets on a large boulder in a nearby canyon.

The old road has disappeared into the desert somewhere past Tule Tank, but we found it again near the base of Tordillo Mountain. At an intersection we came upon another piece of history—a large circle of rocks with a straight line of smaller ones inside it, and another cluster that looked like a broken figure 8. Here, again, legend has taken over, whatever the true facts may be. Lumholtz recounts a story told by his Mexican guides of some prospectors killed here by marauding Indians and buried at this spot. Weight tells a colorful tale of this being the grave of a Mexican pioneer family who died of thirst because their water jug had broken. In any case, a grave it is and whatever its origin, it is part of the tragic history of the Camino del Diablo.

From here the old road looked as though it hadn't been traveled for years, although it was visible. Less than three miles to the west we came upon a huge ironwood tree at the edge of an arroyo. Here we made our second night's camp.

The desert here is wide and flat and the Tinajas Altas range crosses the western horizon. Vegetation is mostly low greasewood, though some palo verde has sprung up. The ironwood tree, described and photographed by Lumholtz in 1910, is a landmark. Henderson mentioned it in DESERT in 1950 and photographed it to see if it had grown since Lumholtz's day. We followed suit and added our photographs to the record. It has grown some, but

its shape and pattern of branches are clearly the same. Lumholtz relates the story of a family of 14 who were either killed by Indians or died of thirst buried near this tree, but we were unable to locate any sign of their graves. Seven miles further, however, we came upon an immense figure 14 laid out in large stones. Could this have been where the family died? If so, how could Lumholtz have confused it with the area of the ironwood tree? Another mystery of desert and legend. Near the 14 are a couple of piles of stones, one in the shape of a cross, the other a small circle. Straight ahead is the steep shallow canyon where the Tinajas Altas tumble like irregular steps down the mountainside.



Deep grain storage holes are evidence of early Indian habitation.

The Tinajas Altas appeared to Lumholtz as a rather depressing place. Perhaps the gruesome history of travelers dying at the foot of the rocks, unable to reach the water in the upper tanks when the lower one was dry, gave it a tinge of foreboding. In his time, too, the ridge opposite the mountain, closing in the end of the canyon from the east, still showed the graves of those who had died there, marked by stones and crosses. He counted nearly 60. Now the ridge has been leveled off on top and during the 1940s a camp was maintained there as a control post for checking hoof and mouth disease of cattle. The graves disappeared, though those buried in them may not all have been disturbed. The ruins of the camp consist of old chicken wire, cracking cement floors, and a few ancient boards and corrugated iron sheets. Rusty tin cans are everywhere and the place is quite a mess.

The Tanks themselves are impressive. There are nine of them. The lowest is reached by a short hike up a rocky trail. Its sides are steep, but the water in it was high. The second tank requires a walk up the face of a sharply sloping rock. This requires some effort and travelers weakened by thirst might have had difficulty making it. We climbed up as far as the fourth tank, but went no further as the cliffs become steep and dangerous to cling to. The third and fourth tanks held good quantities of water, but they were difficult to reach.

Giving up this route, we headed up a draw to the right of the ridge north of the tanks. This took us up over a higher ridge, where we came out far above the upper tanks and had to drop down into the valley below. Lumholtz was told of caves with petroglyphs to the south of this valley. We failed to find them, but this upper canyon is well worth further exploration.

Looking down from above we could see several of the highest tanks. The top one was dry. We managed to get down to the next one which held water, but the three middle ones we could only admire from afar, as they seemed as inaccessible from above as from below. So we climbed back over the ridge and descended to camp.

Below the tanks, we discovered evidence of Indian habitation. Many flat rocks are covered with grinding holes—one rock contained 128 of them, some a foot or more deep. Here and there broken manos turned up and some metates lay among the stones of a former camper's fireplace. High in the cliffs to the right we came upon a cave decorated with several interesting petroglyphs.

For our third and final night in the desert, we camped on a small ridge at the base of the mountain. Moonlight did strange things to these weird mountains that stood out in a sharp, silver white. It was easy to imagine Indian ghosts forever grinding their corn on the flat stones, or thirsty travelers clutching at the smooth rock surfaces in an attempt to reach precious water. This is a place of ghosts, of history and memory, and of awesome beauty.

Returning to civilization the next day by a straight, though rough, road up the Lechugilla Desert to Wellton, we left all this behind. There is a movement to make this area into a National Park. If

this should happen, we can only hope that the Park Service will preserve the unusual feature of this one—the feeling that time has not moved on, that nothing has changed, that the days of the old Camino are still here, and that Father Kino on muleback, a Mexican settler's oxcart or the pioneer wagon that may have been named Nameer's will be coming down the moonlit trail any moment. We hope it will respect this sense of timelessness and not disturb the ghosts who live here, for it is they and the hard dusty road they traveled that make this land something special to visit. □

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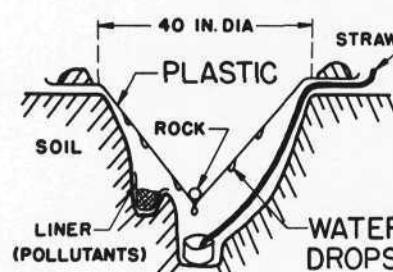
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# THE LEGEND OF LOOKOUT

by Roger Mitchell



You don't have to be a ghost town buff to have heard of such as Calico, Cerro Gordo, and Panamint in Southern California. These old camps, accessible today in the family automobile, are popular destinations for weekend trips in the desert. But in this day of expanding population, it is sur-

prising to find that the Southern California desert has played host to some four dozen communities which once hustled with activity, but are now silenced and without a single inhabitant. Some of these camps, like Old Dale and Crackerjack, have disappeared without leaving hardly a trace. Others, like Millspaugh and Copper City, are within military reservations and closed to the

public. Still, a number of interesting sites are accessible. Lookout is one such example.

In May of 1875 silver was discovered on the east slope of the Argus Range overlooking Panamint Valley. Because of its fine view, the newly organized mining district was appropriately named the "Lookout District." A town of the same name was founded near the diggings on top of a barren windswept mountain.

At first the ore proved to be so rich in silver that it was put in sacks and carried by mule across Panamint Valley, and up Surprise Canyon to be refined in the smelters at Panamint City, then a thriving community of more than 1000 inhabitants. New prospects on Lookout Mountain developed into mines and in less than a year the production of this spunky little camp drew the attention of San Francisco mining speculators headed by Senator George Hearst, father of William Randolph Hearst. The Senator and his associates bought the Modoc and other promising mines and the town of Lookout really began to boom.

In 1876 veteran freighter Remi Nadeau built a road along the eastern flank of the Argus Range so his mule trains could bring in supplies. Among the first of Nadeau's cargo were two large reduction furnaces which would permit ore to be smelted at the mines. By fall of 1877, these two furnaces turned out more than 300 silver-lead bars every day, the ore averaging \$200 to \$400 per ton. As happened elsewhere, the bullion was turned out faster than it could be hauled away. Large stockpiles of ingots began to build up.

By 1877 the insatiable appetite of the furnaces had consumed everything nearby which would burn. A road was built across Panamint Valley to the pinyon covered slopes of Wildrose Canyon where ten kilns were constructed to supply the furnaces of Lookout with charcoal. Then another road was built westward across the Argus Range. By May

*Scale at Lookout used to weigh ore wagons.*



of 1877 a tri-weekly stage connected Lookout with Darwin and Panamint City and Lookout consisted of some 40 to 50 houses with two general stores and three saloons.

The camp kept active through the 1870s, but gradually the most accessible ore bodies became exhausted and the miners began to drift away. The mountaintop metropolis died, although the mines of Lookout Mountain experienced several short revivals. Although the richest ore is worked out, each major increase in the price of silver or lead brings renewed activity in the Minetta, Carbonate, Defense, and Queen of Sheba mines.

Lookout may be reached today by driving north from Trona on State Highway 178. At a point 30 miles north of Trona, take the left fork, avoiding the road to Wildrose Canyon and Death Valley. About seven miles beyond the fork, a good desert road leads westward toward the base of the Argus Range. The turnoff is marked by a sign indicating Minetta Mine. After following this road four miles, you will reach the old Nadeau freight road at the base of Lookout Mountain. The Minetta Mine is to the left on the south side of the mountain and the trail up to the Modoc Mine is on the north side. If a steep climb of 1400 feet does not appeal to you, there is an easier way to reach the Modoc Mine and the ruins of Lookout.

Turn right on the Nadeau Road and drive north approximately two miles to a fork marked by an old ore loading

shoot. An aged sign reading Defense Mine points to the left. Turn left here and you will soon enter Stone Canyon. Drivers of standard automobiles may continue three miles to a narrow spot in the canyon. From here it is a relatively easy two-mile walk to Lookout. Those with four-wheel drive can proceed up the road to the ridge where the road forks. The left fork doubles back and approaches Lookout from the rear. The right fork (built in 1877) continues up the canyon and eventually leads to Darwin. This fork cannot be used today, however, because part of the Darwin Road crosses the China Lake Naval Ordnance Test Station.

The elements have taken a toll at Lookout's windswept townsite, although the stone walls of about fifty buildings remain in various stages of ruin. Judging from the number of broken champagne bottles, life in Lookout must have been mighty tolerable—or perhaps intolerable—in its day. Scales once used to weigh ore wagons lie on the north side of Main Street and to the east end of town an ancient boiler remains. Today the town's only inhabitant is a wren who every spring builds her nest in the protected shelter of an open safe.

It is paradoxical that the Wildrose Charcoal Kilns, only one chapter in the Lookout story, are visited by tens of thousands of people each year, and yet the town that supported them is but a few miles away and seldom heard of, much less visited. □

*Only stone walls remain to tell the story of better days.*



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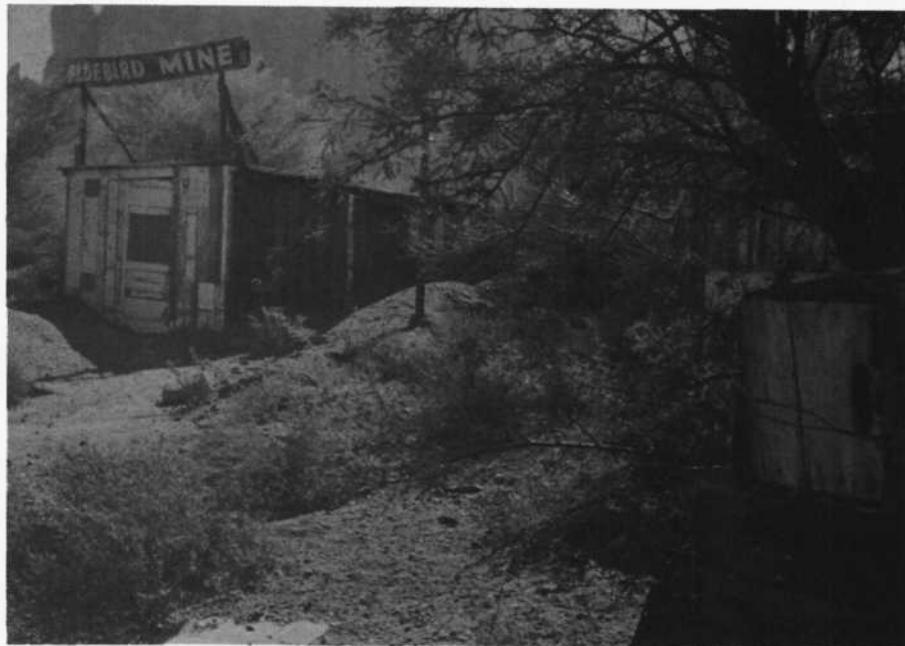
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# *In the Shadow of a Legend*

by Patrick Manion



*Tours are conducted through the Old Bluebird Mine.*



**N** locale and history, Goldfield, Arizona remains in the shadow of the Superstition Mountains. Situated on the western side of the cursed mountain, Goldfield marks the site of the only important gold producing region in the wilderness area. The Superstitions, originally called Sierra de la Espuma (Mountain of the Foam) after a Pima Indian flood myth, are today synonymous with gold.

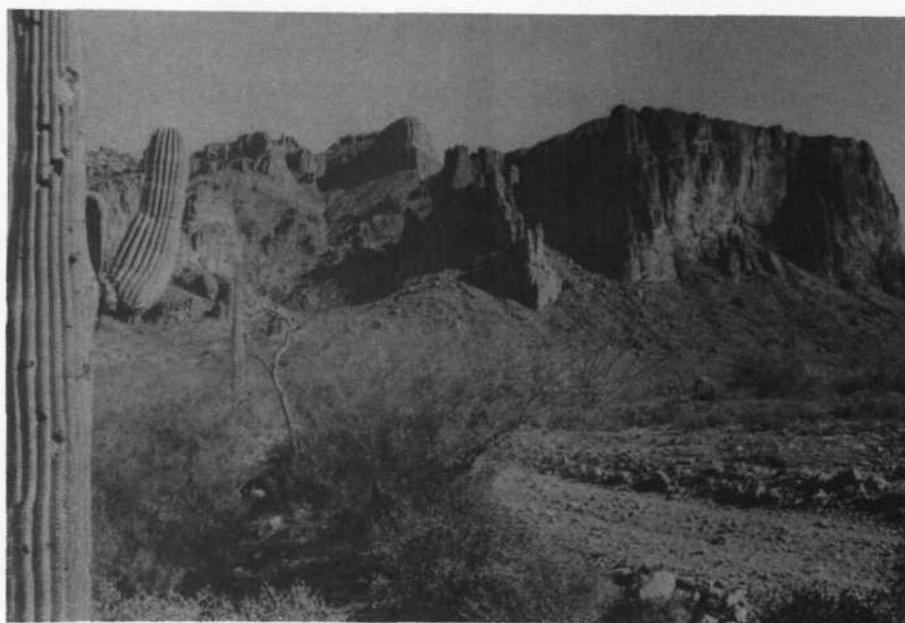
The Spanish mined the area early. Jacob Walzer, the Lost Dutchman, is known to have placer gold mined near Goldfield, before it boomed. Rumors suggest that the Goldfield site may have furnished the Dutchman with his plethora of gold.

Today, Goldfield is reached by traveling 35 miles east of Phoenix on U.S. Highway 60-70 to Apache Junction, then proceeding northeast on the Apache Trail (State Highway 88) five miles to the old town site, located on the highway that once served as its main street.

The camp spawned from the five claims of J. R. Morse, which sold for \$20,000. It was in 1893 when the *Tempe News* reported great wealth at the Mammoth Mine in Goldfield and predicted a "great onslaught" to the region. In the next decade over \$4,000,000 worth of gold ore was mined, including some raw, virgin gold so pure that it was sent to the mint without processing.

Late 1893 saw Goldfield with 29 houses, gambling establishments, one mill, and another mill planned. Water was abundant from deep wells, but contemporary reports indicate the water wasn't good for drinking unless boiled. People lived well on bacon, Irish potatoes, and coffee as their standard diet.

*In locale and history, Goldfield lies in the shadow of the Superstitions.*



The town covered a three-mile radius. living quarters were normally built with canvas and palo verde tree branches as poles; mesquite branches were used for overhanging porches. However, sleeping outdoors was common for the more than 1500 people who lived at Goldfield during its boom days.

In the early 1890s, the Mammoth Mine was worked by C. Hall and D. Sullivan. Encouraging prospects continued through the early 90s. In the first six months of 1897 the *Phoenix Herald* reported 15 to 16 claims. But by November the same newspaper told of the mines closing despite a seemingly plentiful supply of ore. According to their reports, the exodus from Goldfield was almost complete by December.

There was little activity in the mines until 1910 when George U. Young, a mayor of Phoenix and the last territorial Secretary of State from 1909-12, purchased the mine. Under Young Mines, Ltd., Young spent 15 years digging three shafts to depths of a 1000 feet. He installed a 10-ton amalgamation mill and a 50-ton cyanide plant. But he never had great success.

The mine was flooded in 1917. Goldfield, or Youngberg, as the Post Office designated it in 1920, went broke in 1928. Later the same year, the mine was reorganized under the title of Apache Trail Gold Mining Co. They deepened the shaft but had small production in 1929 and '30, at which time a cave-in sealed the fate of the once boom town.

In 1934 the Goldfield Mining and Leasing Co. took control of Goldfield and installed pumps to drain the water from the shafts. The effort failed. A inscription on one of the gambling houses read prophetically, "Her picks is rust. Her bones is dusk. It's 30 years since she went bust."

In 1948, still another attempt was made to resurrect Goldfield. Alfred Strong Lewis, a mining engineer employed at the town 30 years earlier, formed a new company with four other men—Hugh Nichols, Ted Sliger, Carl Waterbury, and Tom Russell. Their efforts were futile. In 1952, the mill was converted to a custom tungsten mill. Since 1950, about \$50,000 of gold ore has been mined. Today there is evidence of some activity, but productive Mormon Slope was played out before 1898.

The population of Goldfield today is 24. Few buildings remain. Most were destroyed by a fire that leveled the town in 1942. There are almost no remnants of old living quarters.

The town has not aged well. It looks unproductive, but it retains that majestic quality of heritage. To the traveler seeking authentic locales of western history, it embodies the spirit of all former boom towns. Tourists can visit the old camp and take guided tours through the still-intact Bluebird Mine. Open pits remain, as do some old rail tracks, a few well-rusted mining cars, and a host of legends.

The land now provides a "gold mine" for land developers, however. Already ranch-style houses populate the desert landscape and an elaborate Western decorated restaurant called the Mining Camp is a favorite with tourists. The Mining Camp serves its dinners on tin plates and the diners feast on chicken, pork, beef, steak and potatoes prepared in Western fashion. The restaurant sports a gift shop and papers its walls with old newspaper clippings which tell of the Lost Dutchman Gold Mine and the mysterious deaths in the Superstitions. At the edge of civilization, Goldfield is yet little affected by the rapid urbanization of metropolitan Phoenix and has never suffered the pains of over-commercialization.

With the 5200-foot Superstition Mountains hovering above just one mile away, Goldfield offers keen scenic beauty of basically undisturbed desert landscape. A picturesque, desert botanical garden attracts nature lovers. Tall Saguars, prickly pears, barrel, and jumping cacti are in abundance, as are ocotillo and palo verde trees, and the mesquite brush. Roadrunners, snakes, cactus wren, squirrels, tortoises, coyotes, horny toads, and even a few javelina are common.

As a gesture to its unmolested natural beauty, a few miles southeast of Goldfield a western movie town called Apache Land has been established to accommodate several popular television shows that feature the West. Somehow this doesn't seem to disturb the combination of historical fact and legend that make this rare spot, only 45 minutes from Phoenix, a worthwhile adventure for back country travelers. □

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# Rawhides to Riches at Ajo

by Jack Sowell



OME rotting, much-worn rawhide ore buckets, and a few man-made gouges in the hillside, marked the spot in southern Arizona where Spanish silver miners had walked away from one of the world's largest deposits of copper ore.

And in 1854 Peter R. Brady, for a plugged nickel, would have walked away too. But Brady had a job to do in that unmapped area of dust, heat, cactus and thirsty-looking lizards. He had been sent there by his boss, Colonel A. B.

across the line in Sonora, Mexico.

The *Planchas* mine was actually rediscovered, but there were no more 2700-pound silver nuggets like the one reported. They did find a 19-pound chunk of silver and a few days later a four-ounce silver nugget, but after that they couldn't even find a dime's worth of the white metal. The party then returned to the Ajo site where six of the original group had been left to prospect the place.

The Brady party, consisting of Brady, F. Ronstadt, E. E. Dunbar, Joe Yancy, G. Kibbers, George Williams, Dr. Webster, Charles Hayward, McElroy, Porter,

smelter capable of processing copper ore. This just happened to be in Swansea, Wales, in far off England.

The Arizona Mining and Trading Company failed in 1859 and very little mining was done at Ajo for the next 30 years, according to available reports. Then in 1890 things began to pick up again.

No history of Southwestern mining would be complete without some mention of nefarious schemes and schemers. In the Ajo area this element was represented by one A. J. Shotwell, alleged swindler, fake mine-stock promoter and

*One of the world's largest open-pit copper mines developed from an early prospect once rejected as impractical.*



Gray of the proposed Texas & Pacific Railroad, to secure some samples of the reportedly rich silver-copper ore.

The samples were rich, as it turned out, but with the mineral content transposed. It was more copper than silver, which was probably why the Spanish miners had lost interest.

At any rate, it was rich enough that Brady returned to the spot in October of that year, along with 20 venturesome, but inexperienced "miners." Their plan was to relocate the old mines and also to search farther southeastward for the fabulous *Planchas de la Plata* mines

Bendel, Cook, and some others whose names are lost were the first white men to mine for copper in Arizona. Their organization, called the Arizona Mining and Trading Company, was doomed to failure, however.

First there was the scarcity of water. All that was immediately available was rainwater, which quickly became brackish in the sinkholes. Other water had to be hauled by mule-pack from the Colorado River, almost a hundred miles away through Indian infested country.

Another problem, nearly as bad, was that of getting the ore to the nearest

general skullduggery expert.

Shotwell acquired options on a large number of claims held by some old desert rats who sat in the shade and talked of "gittin' rich, one o'these days." Maybe they should have watched how Shotwell did it.

He hied himself to St. Louis to do some more prospecting—this time in a more fertile territory—people. There he became acquainted with John R. Boddie, a salesman of repute and integrity.

Boddie had many well-to-do friends and customers who figured that his good judgment in other lines must surely hold

true in the simple matter of mining copper ore. They fell over themselves to become willing lambs for Shotwell to shear.

The St. Louis Copper Company was formed and money began to pour in. Back in Ajo a small mill was built to concentrate what Shotwell claimed was 30% copper ore.

Water, of course, was still the main worry at Ajo, but the wily promoter didn't let a little thing like that stand in his way. He quickly insured his venture by organizing, on the q.t., a firm he called the Rescue Mining Company, to "rescue" the St. Louis Company when the time was ripe. Also, as an ace in the hole, Shotwell set up the Tri-Mountain Copper Company.

There was naturally a lack of profits for the St. Louis Company, and to hold the interest of the stock-holders he arranged for a committee of them to visit the holdings. This was arranged, not entirely by coincidence, for a time when water would be at a maximum in the sink-holes.

Shotwell beat the committee back to Ajo, set things up for a mill "run," and rubbed his hands gleefully.

They arrived in Ajo via a Concord stage from Gila Bend, to see how things were progressing. Shotwell "ran off" a batch of the very richest ore he had been able to accumulate and showed his investors about \$35,000 worth of copper concentrates. But in the excitement he neglected to mention that this had all cost the St. Louis Copper Company a trifle over \$45,000.

The company began to flounder shortly thereafter and Shotwell was right on hand with his Rescuing Mining Company to cut a slice of the juicy ripe melon. A short time later he merged the Rescue Mining Company with his Tri-Mountain Mining Company, then by some slight-of-hand emerged with most of the stock when he merged these two with the St. Louis Company.

While all this was going on, an invention called the Rendall Process was being used in Ajo by the Rendall Ore Reduction Company, which had also acquired a few claims. This process was claimed by Rendall himself to be capable of reducing any quantity or kind of ore—to what state or condition, he didn't say. Whether or not Shotwell was



*Early Ajo shafts at the time of the Shotwell episode.*



*This store was favorite gathering place in a town where there wasn't much to do.*

involved in this, the records are not quite clear, but the process was successful in reducing one thing at least. It reduced the finances of those who had invested in it.

Meanwhile, Shotwell was at it again. Boddie, still not convinced that there was no profit in copper mining, let the fast-talking Shotwell silver-tongue him into starting another company. They returned to St. Louis and set up the Cornelia Copper Company, the name honoring Boddie's first wife.

The Cornelia Copper Company of course had the usual difficulties in this country where, according to one old prospector, "Water is scarcer than whiskey!" But help was on the way in the person of "Professor" Fred L. McGahan and his Vacuum Smelter. This smelter, said the

good professor, would extract not only the copper, but everything else of value, even some imaginary elements which he did not elaborate upon. This was in 1906 and Boddie, along with his St. Louis buddies, frantically financed the building of a smelter based on specifications supplied by McGahan, who also supervised construction. The price was \$34,000.

As they all awaited its completion, the professor calmly remarked, "It's quite simple really. Basically it amounts to pouring a little coal-oil over a pile of the ore and setting fire to it. It will melt, reducing the ore to an easy handling liquid."

Then without batting an eye, he glibly explained how the "vacuum" contraption would seek out the valuable metals

so that gold, silver, copper and all the baser metals could each be drawn off from its own individual spigot! And he also said that he was the only one with the scientific knowledge to determine just when the ore was in the proper liquid state and must therefore handle the spigot turning himself.

"What's more," he further pointed out, "the fumes of oxygen and hydrogen released by the melting ore can be salvaged and used over and over again so that no more fuel need be purchased!"

When everything was ready, McGahan suddenly announced that he had to make a hurried trip to Los Angeles. From there he sent back word that before he would activate the "vacuum" another \$50,000 must be forthcoming from the investors!

Flabbergasted, the stock-holders were just coherent enough to send one of their number, a Dr. Wallace, to Ajo to shut off the spigot that was draining their wallets.

A friend of Boddie's named Rumph was chief clerk. When he went upon Wallace's orders to discharge the men he found the superintendent, Flagler, who also happened to be McGahan's nephew, attempting to remove the magic spigots. Rumph told him to stop, but Flagler threatened to shoot the clerk if he didn't get away from there and attend to his own business.

Instead of leaving the scene, however, Rumph reversed the action. He pulled out a gun and let Flagler have it, three times in the shoulder. Dr. Wallace, ever mindful of his Hippocratic oath, bound up the man's wounds, but remained steadfast in closing the smelter.

When the sheriff came from Tucson to arrest Rumph, he is said to have taken one look at the "vacuum" smelter and departed for home after calling Rumph a damned fool for not learning how to shoot straighter.

The great vacuum that had been produced in the pockets of the Cornelius investors seemed only to serve as additional impetus to them. They still wanted to get rich.

This time their venture was a huge investment in a "hydrofluoric acid leaching process" which was almost as fantastic as had been the vacuum smelter. However, it did work to a certain extent,

it produced a few pounds of copper at about a dollar a pound.

Shotwell now also found it feasible to leave for parts unknown, having bilked all concerned with his silver tongue speaking in copper overtones.

About this time an entirely new method of treating low-grade copper ore had been developed in Utah and once again the desert country was alive with engineers and large mining companies began bidding against each other for a chance



The Ajo mine in 1919.

to take a whack at what was now, logically, known as Boddie's Folly. Some English financiers optioned a group of Ajo claims. Then the General Development Company grabbed the remaining stock of the tottering Cornelius. They named it the *New Cornelius Copper Company*. A Mr. Seely Mudd took over what was left of the Rendall Ore Reduction Company.

Then, in 1911, Captain John C. Greenway, general manager of Calumet & Arizona Copper Company at Bisbee, directed his geologist, Ira B. Joralemon, to find a spot where open pit mining would be practical. Joralemon had visited the Ajo country some years before and figured that this was as good a place as any to start looking. Anyway, Greenway hadn't been specific as to location. He had merely said "Find one!"

A few days of studying the terrain and taking some samples convinced Joralemon that he hadn't guessed wrong. He so informed Greenway, who promptly optioned 70% of the *New Cornelius* stock and set a crew of drillers to work.

Two years and \$25,000 feet of drilling later, they proved the geologist correct. The Ajo hills were holding the

secret. Underneath them there were literally millions of tons of 1.5 percent copper ore.

The water problem was also solved about this time. Six miles north of Ajo a 600 foot well was drilled, which supplied water for both domestic and mine use. Another important project was also completed. A railroad had been built to Gila Bend, 40 miles northward.

The Tucson, Cornelius & Gila Bend Railroad could now haul the concentrates and also passengers—that is, those who were hardly enough to stand the 40-mile teeth-jarring trip by "motor-car." The motor-car was a huge White bus fitted with railroad wheels. It made the run every night. There were canvas flaps instead of windows and the cold desert night air blowing across from the Gulf of California was somewhat less than comfortable.

The TC&GB was affectionately and with colorful profanity called the "Tough Coming and Going Back Railroad." (The writer can attest to the logic of this nickname and reputation, having ridden on that "motor-car" many times during 1916-1924!)

The New Cornelius Copper Company merged with the Calumet & Arizona Company in 1929, then, in 1931, this consolidation was merged with the huge Phelps-Dodge Corporation. The new company was called the Phelps-Dodge New Cornelius Branch and so remains today.

Increasing over the years, a capacity of 20,000 tons daily was reached in 1950 and 10 years later, 30,000 tons. From 1916 through 1966 the Ajo mines have processed over 500 million tons of low-grade copper ore and waste material. And it still looks good to mining men. A core-sample diamond drilling company, engaged in 1928, had found ore bodies that they said were "good for another 50 years, maybe more."

So from some old rawhide orebuckets in Ajo's hot, dusty hills has grown one of the world's largest open-pit copper mines, third largest in the United States.

But shouldn't *some* credit be given A. J. Shotwell and the "professor" for all this, in spite of their questionable business tactics? After all they *did* keep the country jumping through their persistence in searching for the fast buck! □

# NEW IDEAS

by V. LEE OERTLE

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## NEW POP OUT CAMPER FOR SMALL VANS

The popularity of the compact buses and vans has encouraged several manufacturers to build special campers for them. McNamee Coach Corporation has just unveiled a unique roof-topper that is positively the largest, roomiest, and plushest unit I've ever inspected on a small van. The roof of the van is removed, and the new camper insert is lowered over it like a glove. It covers the entire top, adding about two feet to the roof-line; and it protrudes out the back, adding a couple of feet of extra space and side-entryway. In addition, a pop-out rear section provides still another bedroom at the campsite. Despite the massive appearance of this new van camper the maker says that it doesn't exceed the safe GVW of the van, nor is it hard to handle in windy regions. For details contact McNamee Coach Corp., 2501 Rosemead Blvd., So El Monte, Calif. 91733.

## SUBSTITUTE FOR ICE

Well, it could be in some situations. They call it E-Z Freeze. The new jelly-like substance is sealed inside tough plastic bags in a two-part package. The buyer squeezes one end of the bag, which forces the two substances together. The result is a chemical reaction "cold pack." The cold charge eventually wanes, but the bags can be used over again by simply freezing them in the refrigerator. Use them as dripless ice. The plastic won't let water dribble out as it thaws. The fact that EZ-Freeze literally "makes" cold in that initial chemical reaction is the factor which brought it to my attention. Many good reasons can be put forth to keep an "instant cold pack" on hand while traveling and camping. The 5x8-inch size sells for \$1.25, and the 6x10-inch size at \$2 each, postpaid. Made by Jack Frost Laboratories, 810 W. 9th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. 33311.

## RUBBER CAP FOR HITCH-BALL

I wish I had a dollar for every time I walked behind a car and banged a shinbone against a protruding towing-hitch. Or a dime for every lump of grease picked up off the exposed hitch-ball. The rubber hitch-ball cover made by Rupco is of tough, heavy-duty flexible rubber—not plastic. It slips over all standard hitch-ball sizes. About \$1.98 from Rubber Products Co., 6262 Cochran Road, Cleveland (Solon) Ohio, 44139.



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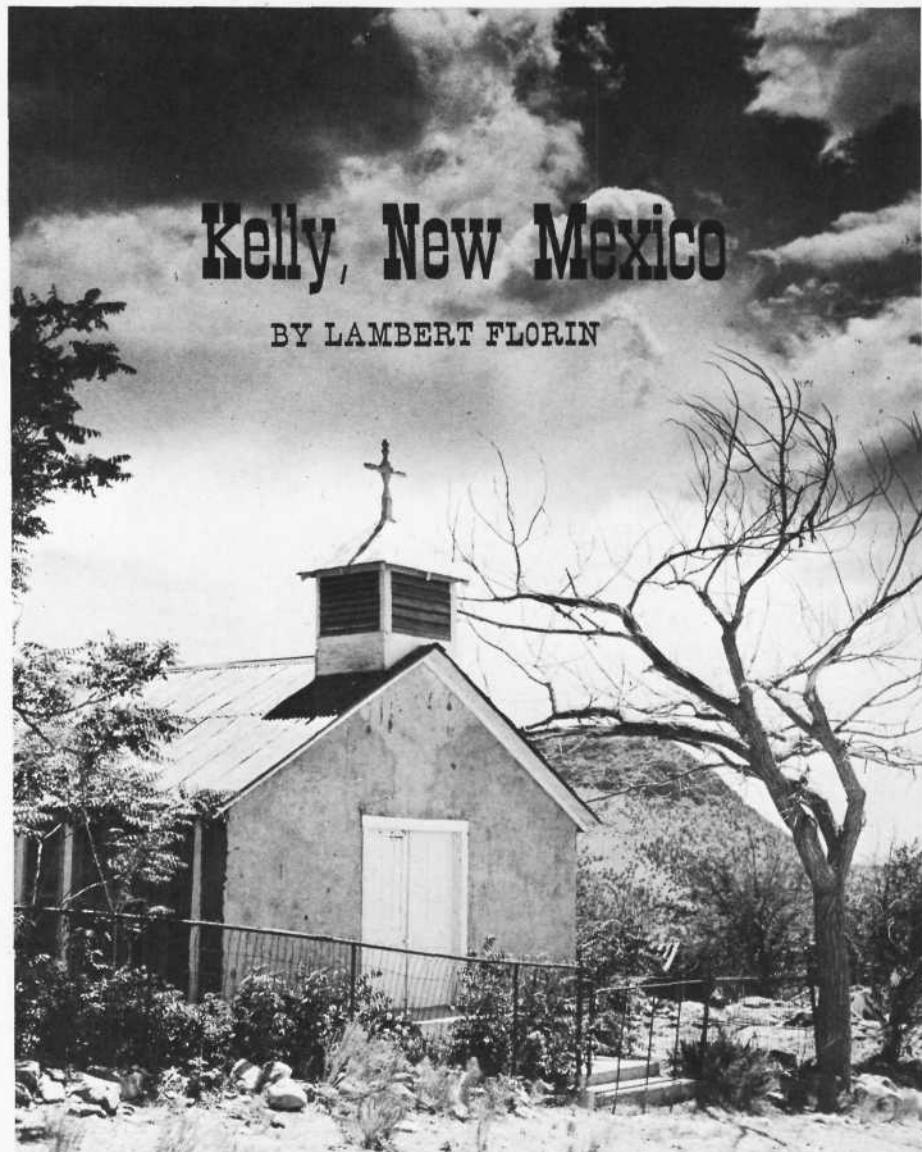
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## Kelly, New Mexico

BY LAMBERT FLORIN



LMOST everyone is a rockhound to some extent. The soldier tramping through New Mexico with the Union Army in 1862 was no exception. Somewhere near what later became the mining camp of Kelly, the man in blue noticed and picked up an interesting rock. Although it was awkward to carry, he lugged it to the home of a friend, J. S. Hutchinson, whom he knew was informed in geology.

Hutchinson was interested in the sample, but didn't get to the Magdalena Mountains to prospect until 1866, and

then didn't find any more rocks like it. While searching, however, he discovered a rich lode of oxidized lead-zinc and staked two claims, the Graphic and Juanita—the latter named for a current girl friend in Magdalena, Mexico, two miles down the hill.

After blasting enough ore to show there was plenty more in the hole, Hutchinson built a crude blast furnace of adobe and there smelted out his lead. After casting the metal into pigs he then shipped them to Kansas City via oxcart over the Santa Fe Trail. Hutchinson made enough from his first shipment to carry on his one-man operation.

While a new batch of ore was heating in the adobe oven, the miner did considerable "gophering" in the vicinity. On one of these forays, he found another outcropping. Hutchinson had made friends with an Andy Kelly who ran a sawmill in Magdalena, so he took a sample for him to examine. Kelly homesteaded the claim and mined it until the work interfered too much with his sawmill operations. As he lost interest, he neglected the necessary assessment work so Hutchinson, who had regretted having let his discovery slip from his hands, jumped the claim and began mining the ore for himself. He soon saw that this was a far better deposit than either the Graphic or Juanita, and in addition contained sizable amounts of silver and some copper.

Hutchinson became so excited over his new prospect that he found little time to continue work on the earlier Juanita and leased it to Col. E. W. Eaton. Ironically, Col. Eaton had hardly begun expanding the Juanita when he uncovered a vein of silver far richer than any in Hutchinson's new love, the Kelly.

Naturally these discoveries didn't remain unnoticed by miners elsewhere. New claims were staked in the vicinity and a new town named Kelly was laid out on the mountainside with adobe houses built upon frame structures from Kelly's sawmill.

In the late 1870s Hutchinson sold his Graphic mine for \$30,000 and the Kelly for \$45,000. The new owners of the Kelly built a smelter near Socorro, and for the next 12 years turned out more lead than did any other area in New Mexico.

The next decade saw a real boom at Kelly. Not all incoming population was interested in mining. Ranchers, lumbermen and stockmen settled there and in nearby Magdalena. As the towns grew, living quarters became scarce or unobtainable. Two hotels were erected, but both managements found it necessary to institute some unique rules. One was that no one could use a room for more than eight hours. This made it possible to operate the hostleries on three shifts.

The railroad came to Magdalena in 1885. This was considered fortuitous by more than ore shippers. Indians had become troublesome, raiding and burning ranches and often killing settlers. With

the coming of the iron horse, an engine coupled to a train of cars was kept in readiness to carry women and children to safety in Socorro, in case of attack.

Cowboys from outlying ranches arrived regularly on weekends to spend a couple of hours in the saloons, for a starter. When sufficiently lubricated they then rode their horses up and down the main street at top speed, shooting out lights. Next came the gun-fighting stage, often resulting in several fatalities, although residents of Kelly insisted that this kind of behavior was confined to Magdalena.

About the time the boom began to fade, some geology-minded men noticed the greenish rocks in the dumps at Graphic. After sending some of these East for testing, they were pleased to learn the green rocks were zinc-carbonate, or Smithsonite, a rare and valuable deposit. Now the Graphic was sold to Sherwin-Williams Paint Company for five times the amount realized as a lead mine and a huge smelter and mill complex was installed above the town, which resulted in a second boom.

With the end of large scale mining, the mill was dismantled in 1922. Although posted, some imposing ruins still stand and can be photographed from the fenced boundaries. The last shipment of any kind of ore sent out was in 1943. Already a ghost, Kelly then became entirely deserted.

Our photo shows the Church of Saint John the Baptist. Originally a residence, the building was remodeled for church purposes when Kelly boomed. Though never having a resident priest, St. John's congregation was ministered to by a pastor from Magdalena. Now, once each year on the feast day of Saint John, ranchers come from far and near to celebrate mass in the old and otherwise deserted church. □

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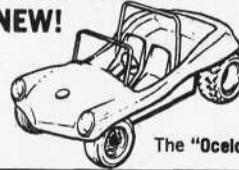
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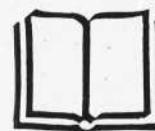


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# BACK COUNTRY

## Erle Stanley Gardner Stresses Cooperation

"I have seen an entire town of 1500 people appear on the desert overnight only to disappear completely three days later without even a cigarette paper to show where the people had been."

Addressing delegates to the annual convention of the California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs, Erle Stanley Gardner was describing a typical annual safari of a 4-wheel drive club.

Although known as a mystery writer, Gardner has written eight books on his experiences on the desert and Baja California. He is often referred to as the "patron saint of jeepers" for his interest in 4-wheel drive activities.

After praising the delegates for their preservation and conservation activities, Gardner minced no words when he warned them they must constantly be aware of their public image and protect themselves through good public relations.

"To protect your interests you must



be a militant group of people . . . and when anyone steps on your toes fight back and fight back hard," he said referring to the continual struggle to prevent government branches from closing wilderness areas to vehicular traffic.

"As organized groups you have rules and regulations governing your conduct

in the back country," he said. "However, there are thousands of jeepers who do not belong to your clubs and who must be reached and educated to not destroy and litter. You know the vandal is not a member of your organization, but the general public doesn't and as a result your public image is damaged once again."

Gardner said the same thing holds true with the fast growing dune buggy owners. He pointed out there are few if any dune buggy organizations similar to 4-wheel drive clubs.

"The general public does not make a distinction, like you do, between 4-wheel drives and dune buggies so to protect your image you must work with the dune buggy people, help them organize clubs similar to yours so you can work together in creating a better public image and protecting your rights to enjoy the back country," he concluded.

## FOUR WHEEL CHATTER . . .

by Bill Bryan

The recent annual convention of the California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs was the finest and best co-ordinated meet ever held by this group. The only complaint I heard was that the rooms of the individual clubs were not together. On the other hand, this enabled strangers to get to know each other.

Guest of honor was Erle Stanley Gardner who was accompanied by his secretary, Jean Bethel, and ranch foreman, Sam Hicks. (See story, this page.)

Another speaker was Mr. Grant Morse, representing the United States Forestry Service, who spoke on the need for cooperation between our groups and government branches such as the Forestry Service, Bureau of Land Management, etc.

Unlike some government officials we have heard who seem to know little about what they are telling you, Mr. Morse impressed me as knowing what is

**Four wheeling has lost two of its most devoted champions as the result of a tragic airplane accident near Ocotillo Wells. Robert Feuerhelm, popular owner of Milne Brothers, was killed when hit by an airplane piloted by Mal Fink. After hitting Bob, the plane crashed, killing Fink and his passenger, N. C. "Speed" Boardman, well known race driver. Seriously injured was Fink's son, David, 15. A friendly, fun loving businessman, Bob was well known in jeeping circles and will be missed by his many friends.**

☆ ☆

going on in his territory and is trying to honestly do a job with concern for ALL users of the back country.

The meeting was attended by more than 600 members and guests with 52 of the 75 clubs of the Association pres-

ent. Members of the convention committee who did such an outstanding job were Chairman Sylvia Neely, and Committee Chairmen Carol and Ken Smith, Lynn and Lee Chauvet, Margaret Edwards, Mike Tatro, Fletcher Hantke, Bud Hammers, George Butts, Jo and John Twiford, Bill Whitstone and Al and Judy Jensen. The Grass Valley 4-Wheelers won both the Association's Conservation and Preservation trophy and Desert Magazine's Conservation and Preservation award.

Doug Reeder, who has done an outstanding job as president this past year, presided. New 1968 officers installed are Gene Morris, president; Joyce Shea, secretary; Olive Spuler, treasurer; Mike Tatro, northern vice-president; Fred Stalley, central vice-president; Dick Myers, southern vice-president; May Brainard, northern secretary; Jack Edwards, central secretary; Jaye Zavits, southern secretary; Homer Thomas, northern memberships;

# TRAVEL



The National Four Wheel Drive Grand Prix and Dune Buggy Championships will be held in Riverside, California April 5 through 7. The off-road event is a competition between vehicles with 12 classes and thousands of dollars in prize money. Open to the general public, drivers must be male and have valid driver's license. Entry fees are \$100.00 for each vehicle. The nationally known event is expected to attract thousands of spectators at Van Buren Boulevard and the Santa Ana River. For details write to Grand Prix, Box 301, Fullerton, Calif. 92632.

Don McQueen, central memberships; Bob Parker, southern memberships; Charlie Erickson, Pismo Rally chairman and Bob Nul, co-chairman.

After the door prizes were given out, some real good entertainment was presented by Skip Barrett of the Sacramento Jeepers and a funny routine by Jack and Ginger Nunnely, Dave Austin and Bob Smith of the Boondockers Four Wheel Drive Club. Anyone who didn't have a good time or get Uncle Erle's autograph just wasn't trying.

Recently I flew to Las Vegas with a press party for a briefing on the forthcoming 7-11 Race sponsored by the National Off Road Racing Association and the Stardust Hotel. With Erle Stanley Gardner, I was able to travel over 70 miles of the course in a helicopter. Man, you talk about a way to go jeepin' this is the only way to look for lost trails and mines, but that \$100 an hour helicopter cost hampers people like myself. All I can say is mark your calendar and wire the old rig together and make it over to Las Vegas on June 11, 1968. For details on the race write to NORRA, 19730 Ventura Blvd., Suite 6, Woodland Hills, Calif. 91364.

## Long Beach Wins Conservation Award

Planted seedlings in the Horse Flats area of the Angeles National Forest have been saved due to the efforts of the Desert Fox Jeep Club of Long Beach, California.

For their time and efforts in constructing catch basins and watering the undernourished seedlings members of the club will receive Desert Magazine's Conservation and Preservation Award.

"The work was slow and discouraging, for half the seedlings were already dead and the other half were hidden by what little foliage was left on the hill," according to Herb and Jane Halling.

"Sightseers must have thought there was a parade as jeep after jeep made endless trips to the Chilao Ranger Station for more water, and then again as members ranging from three to 70-years-old carried buckets up the hill. One of the hardest workers was Cap Randell, one of the organizers of the National Four Wheel Drive Association. Larry Heady was project chairman."

## Calendar of

## Western Events

*Information on Western Events must be received at DESERT six weeks prior to scheduled date.*

MOTHER LODE MINERAL SOCIETY'S 3rd annual gem and mineral show, Mar. 30 & 31, Davis High School, Modesto, Calif. ....

PALOMAR GEM AND MINERAL CLUB 12th annual show, March 30 & 31, Elks Club, Escondido, Calif. Public invited. No charge.

SANTA MONICA GEMOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S 13th annual show, April 6 & 7, Santa Monica Boys Club, Santa Monica, Calif. Public invited.

NORWALK ROCKHOUNDS CLUB show, April 6, New River Elementary School, 13432 Halcourt Ave., Norwalk, Calif. Free admission.

CONVAIR ROCKHOUND CLUB SHOW, April 6 & 7, Convair Auditorium, 5001 Kearny Villa Rd., San Diego, Calif. Free parking, admission, door prizes.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY GEM AND MINERAL SHOW, April 6 & 7, Fairgrounds, Stockton, Calif.

FOURTH ANNUAL NATIONAL FOUR WHEEL DRIVE GRAND PRIX, April 5 through 7, Riverside, California. Open to 4-wheel drives, dune buggies, motorcycles. For entries write Vic Wilson, P. O. Box 301, Fullerton, Calif. Event held on Santa Ana River bottom at the Van Buren Street crossing. Public invited.

ANNUAL PHOENIX JEEP CLUB 4-wheel drive outing, April 7-14. Write Phoenix Jeep Club, P. O. Box 168, Phoenix, Ariz. for details.

SAN JOSE LAPIDARY SOCIETY'S annual show, April 20 & 21, Old Town, 50 University Ave., Los Gatos, Calif. Special displays and demonstrations.

KERN COUNTY MINERAL SOCIETY'S 10th Annual Gem and Mineral Show, April 20 & 21, Fairgrounds, Bakersfield, Calif. Free admission. Write Hank Clason, 1614 Richland St., Bakersfield.

BERKELEY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY SHOW, April 20 & 21, Contra Costa College, San Pablo, Calif. Write P. O. Box 755, Berkeley, Calif. for details.

RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY FLOWER SHOW, April 27 & 28, Riverside Armory, 2501 Fairmount Blvd., Riverside, Calif. Adults, 75 cents. Children under 12 with adult, free.

TOURMALINE GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY SHOW, May 4 & 5, Helix High School, 7323 University Ave., La M<sup>esa</sup>, Calif. No dealers. Write H. S. Peterson, 264 Blanchard Rd., El Cajon, Calif.

14TH ANNUAL SAREEA AL JAMEL Four Wheel Drive Club Cruise, May 4 & 5. A family outing and fun event. For details write P. O. Box 526, Indio, Calif. 92201.

NORRA CROSS COUNTRY 7-11 RACE, June 11-13, Las Vegas, Nevada. Write NORRA, 19730 Ventura Blvd., Suite 6, Woodland Hills, Calif. 91364. See Bill Bryan's column this issue.

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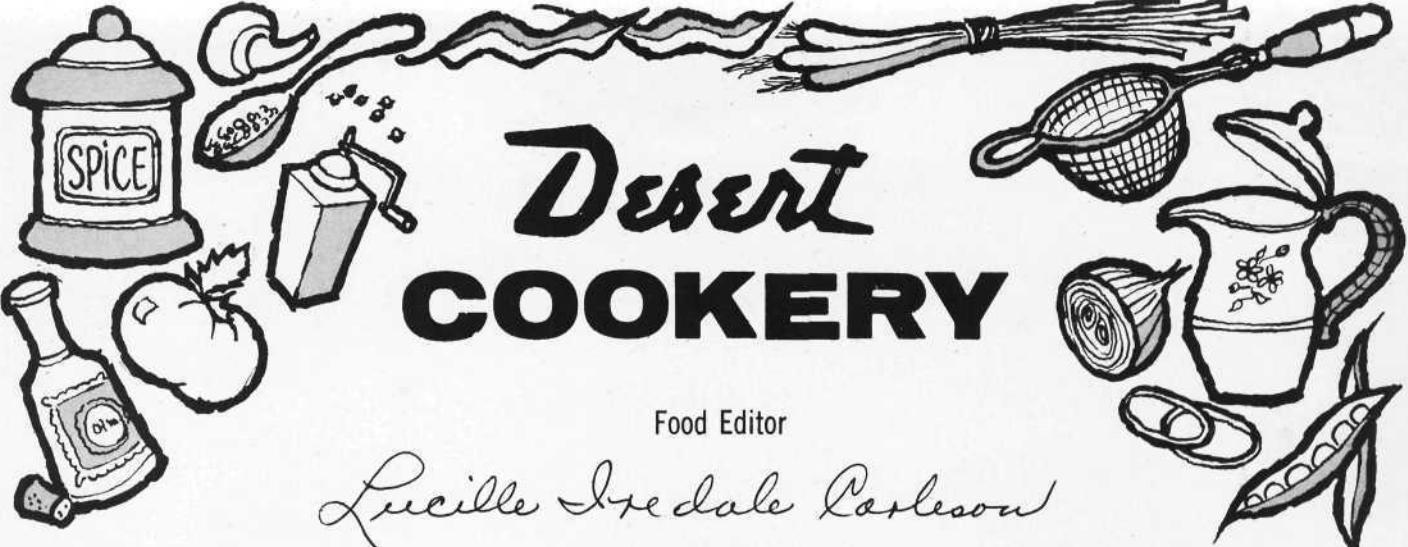
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# Desert COOKERY

Food Editor

*Lucille Ixendale Parslow*

## MOLASSES COOKIES

1 cup molasses  
 1/2 cup shortening  
 1 egg  
 2 tablespoons hot water  
 2 cups sifted flour  
 1 teaspoon soda  
 1/2 teaspoon each of salt, cinnamon, cloves, ginger and nutmeg

Mix molasses, shortening and egg. Stir in hot water. Sift dry ingredients together and gradually add to molasses mixture, stirring until well blended. Drop by tablespoons onto greased baking sheet. If you wish, top each cookie with a walnut half. Bake in 400 degree oven for 8 minutes. Store in tightly covered container.

## MOLASSES COOKIES NO. 2

3 cups flour  
 2 teaspoons baking powder  
 1 teaspoon salt  
 1 teaspoon ginger and 1 of cinnamon  
 3/4 cup evaporated milk or buttermilk  
 1/2 teaspoon vinegar  
 1 cup shortening  
 1 cup sugar  
 1 well-beaten egg  
 1/2 cup molasses

Cream shortening and add sugar beating until fluffy. Combine milk and vinegar. Add egg and molasses to sugar and butter mixture and beat well. Alternately add dry ingredients which have been sifted together to milk and vinegar mixture. Bake at 375 degrees for 15 minutes.

## ALMOND ROCA BARS

1 cup butter or margarine  
 1/2 cup sugar  
 1/2 cup brown sugar  
 1 beaten egg yolk  
 1 teaspoon vanilla  
 2 cups flour  
 1 10 oz. bar milk chocolate

Cream butter and sugars together; add egg yolk, vanilla and flour. Mix thoroughly, easier with your hands, and pat into 9x13x2 inch pan which has been greased. Bake at 350 degrees about 20 minutes. While this is baking, melt chocolate bar over warm, not boiling water. Spread over baked hot cookies and sprinkle with 1 cup chopped nuts. Cut into squares while warm.

## BASIC COOKIE RECIPE

1 cup butter or margarine  
 1 cup brown sugar  
 1/2 cup sugar  
 2 eggs  
 3 1/4 cups flour  
 1 teaspoon baking soda  
 1 teaspoon cream of tartar  
 1/8 cup milk

Cream butter and sugars together until smooth and fluffy. Stir in beaten eggs, one at a time. Sift dry ingredients together and add to creamed mixture, alternating with milk. In order to mix thoroughly, you should knead dough with your hands.

For Nut Cookies, mix in 1 cup pecans or black walnut pieces. Form into roll and slice into 1/2 inch thick slices and bake in 375 degree oven for about 15 minutes.

For Chocolate Cookies, mix in 1 teaspoon cocoa and 1/2 cup chocolate pieces. Form into small balls and flatten. Bake at 375 degrees for 15 minutes.

For Ginger Cookies, mix in 1 tablespoon dark molasses and 1/2 teaspoon ginger. Shape into balls and flatten. If dough sticks to hands, dip hands in water occasionally. Bake at 375 degrees for 15 minutes.

For Gumdrop Cookies, add 1/2 cup gumdrops cut fine. Shape into balls and flatten. Bake at 375 degrees for about 15 minutes.

I divide the dough and make several kinds at one time. If you do not wish to bake them all at once the dough will keep in the refrigerator for several weeks. For a very large batch of cookies, double recipe. This recipe makes about 40 cookies.

## MINCEMEAT SQUARES

1 1/2 cups flour  
 1 cup brown sugar  
 1/2 teaspoon salt  
 1/2 cup shortening  
 1 3/4 cup quick-cooking oats  
 2 cups mincemeat

Combine flour, brown sugar and salt. Cut in shortening until mixture is crumbly; mix in oats. Place half of mixture in bottom of greased 9x9x2 inch pan and pat down. Spread with mincemeat; sprinkle remaining flour mixture over top. Bake in 350 degree oven for 30 minutes. Cut into bars.

# Letters and Answers

Letters requesting answers must include stamped self-addressed envelope.

## Rock Houses in Borrego . . .

Apropos the article "The Rock House Mystery in Anza-Borrego" by Wilson G. Turner in DESERT January '68, Nicholas Schwartz, who later became a saloon keeper in Minneapolis, is the reputed builder of the rock house with the fire place. He is supposed to have lived there with an Indian while he prospected. Apparently the prospecting was successful, for after prodigious labors he found a fortune and packed it on his back to the San Francisco mint. The fortune he found purchased the saloon he operated.

RALPH W. BOWERS,  
San Diego, California.

## On the Griddle . . .

In the February DESERT there is an interesting story about prospecting for fun by Carl Fisher. He writes that many prospectors carry small chemical kits to test rocks for possible content of space age minerals. As this is something new for me, I wrote to the Division of Mines and Geology in San Francisco to inquire. The geologist there responded by writing that there are no satisfactory chemical tests for analyzing ores of niobium, tantalum, beryllium and zirconium. Spectrographic analyses are required for differentiating the ores of these elements.

Has Mr. Fisher discovered something new?  
MICK JIRACK,  
Stateline, Nevada.

## Likes Maps . . .

With due respect to your maps, I do not believe the one accompanying the excellent article about exploring the Dale Mining District in the March issue is sufficient. I find some difficulty in locating some of the mines discussed. However, this issue of DESERT was exceptionally good.

BERNARD FRANK,  
Torrance, California.

## Doesn't Like Maps . . .

The "how to get there" data appended to your travel articles is unnecessary. If a reader is *really* interested in visiting a locale, he will find his way using his own resources. Such a navigational challenge might even discourage weekend excursionists with a six-pack. Don't usurp the role of a travel guide at the expense of information about the desert per se. "Western Adventure and Living" yes, "Travel," please no!

My views might cause a small reduction in your circulation, then again, maybe just the opposite.

DONALD MEADOWS,  
Marysville, California.

*Editor's note: Indeed, they would!*

## Cabin to Give Away . . .

I enjoyed reading about Iona City and am wondering if Mr. Henderson would like to add an authentic miners cabin to his township. I recently acquired a piece of property upon which is a vintage miner's cabin. It is well weathered, but sturdy and I will donate it to Iona City. It's free, but Mr. Henderson will have to come up and get it if he wants it.

The cabin measures roughly 12' by 24' and is mounted on wooden skids. It is built of rough cedar and is delightfully weathered. The interior shows the smoke of many years of service and reveals that the owner, a bachelor gentleman, was not too fastidious a house-keeper. Let me know pronto, as I want to burn it down if Iona City doesn't want it.

JIM MARTIN,  
Greenville, California.

## Oregon Desert . . .

In his November 1967 article about the Oregon desert I was sorry Jack Pepper did not point out that the ecological balance in the Lost Forest is considered to be pretty finely balanced. May we Oregonians ask all that want to visit that area to be careful, please.

Now if I may put in a plug for our installation. It is the Pine Mountain Observatory. It is located 25 miles east of Bend, and then south nine miles from the Oasis of Millican. There is no water available, but we have plenty of clean desert air to make up for some of the shortcomings.

MARTIN G. MCCOY,  
Bend, Oregon.

## Now We Know! . . .

Re the radiesthetist (teleprospection) letter from Robert Plexus in the March DESERT, I would like to define this nomenclature for readers who may be curious. Radiesthesia is the term applied for dowsing by those who entertain the idea that the signals of dowsing are due to direct radiations from the substances themselves. Divination is the term for the same activity, but here religious or belief enters the scene. Rabbdomancy was another term, but dropped from use. Dowsing was first known as souring and then dousing. Dowsing is the recognized term.

Most experts of dowsing will contend the suppositions of the radiesthetic term will fit the functioning when the operator and the substance he is working with is not more than a few feet distant from each other. Distances greater than this is deemed to be a propagation matter, subject to foreign intervention. Dowsing is not to be confused with the electronic metal detector. Each has its own merits, and the electronic metal detector is by far the most reliable of the two. Dowsing requires an intangible faction, but a dowser with a good metal detector is a hard cookie to beat!

DAN C. GEORGE,  
Ontario, California.

*Editor's note: Apparently many readers agree. Mr. Plexus has a number of takers as a result of his letter. Will he please forward the promised information? C.P.*

## Where Is Iona? . . .

I enjoyed the February, 1968, issue of DESERT, but I have one gripe. The Mojave Desert is a large piece of real estate. It's a cinch that Iona City will see no visitors as a result of that article as it now stands. Why don't you drop a line to Mr. H. C. Henderson and ask him to please submit a supplementary paragraph, or a properly oriented map, so we can find his city?

CLAYTON I. KANAGY,  
Los Angeles, California.

*Editor's note: Maybe Mr. Henderson will answer your letter—he hasn't answered ours. The article was supposed to encourage readers to start their own collections, rather than necessarily attract them to his, but a good many readers would like to visit Iona City. Mr. Henderson lives in Canoga Park, California, so we presume his Iona City is there in his back yard. C.P.*

## Chasing the Goose . . .

I am an old prospector and have read DESERT for many years. I can hardly wait for each issue to arrive. However, I think you are sending many prospectors and treasure hunters on wild goose chases, although I shall say that the stories about the Pegleg black nuggets and Mr. Kovack's Lost Hungarian Mine are true.

Some time ago I looked for that small hill where Mr. Pegleg found his black nuggets. I started from Borrego Springs, working south-easterly to San Felipe Creek and the Superstitions, where I had to give up because I didn't have a 4-wheel drive vehicle. I am sure his find was in the Carizo Creek area.

As for the Lost Hungarian Mine (DESERT Feb. '66), I have checked every wash that runs across the Baseline Road up to the Kaiser Iron mine and I am positive there is no placer gold around that district. The placer gold that Mr. Kovac found must have come from some mill dump where placer gold had been panned at an earlier time.

JOHN PROMA,  
Yermo, California.

## Appreciative Reader . . .

I would like to express my gratitude for the Conservation and Preservation Award to the Los Paisanos Club by you and the staff of DESERT Magazine.

My family, as well as other members of the Los Paisanos Club, sincerely hope that your articles will induce our fellow Americans to help keep America Beautiful. It will only be through effort by everyone that the litter problem can be solved.

MYRON B. COOLEY,  
Pomona, California.

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